



**ABDUL QADIR BADAUNI AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES
AND SOCIO-CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL
MILIEU AS SEEN BY A CRITIC**

ABSTRACT

**OF THE
THESIS**

SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

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IN
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BY

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UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF

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ABSTRACT

Abdul Qadir Badauni's *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* is one of the most significant sources of Akbar's reign. But his adverse comments on Akbar and his policies especially on his religious policy have been strongly criticized by a number of modern historians.

However without a close study of Badauni's works, no balanced history of Akbar's reign could be written. As a matter of fact Akbar's religious policy and its resultant unrest and social tension might have remained buried under the blandishment of master stylist Abul Fazl.

Unfortunately, the historians have their assessments only restricted to *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*. His other works have either been completely ignored or only referred casually. Beside that Badauni had been portrayed as a fanatic *Mulla* whose views were extremely orthodox and irrational. Badauni was also a great scholar of Persian, Arabic poetry, Mathematics, astronomy and music besides being an accomplished scholar of traditional sciences. It was indeed in recognition of his literary attainments that Akbar entrusted him with the translation of Indian classics like *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Atharveda* and *Rajtarangni*. Badauni was also associated with the translation of a number of other books, in to Persian.

Above all he was an eyewitness of almost all the important events and developments at the Akbar's court. He was also in touch with people of different shades and opinion at the court. However, in almost all the important studies, his point of view about the social, cultural and religious condition of Akbar's court have not been generally accepted. Indeed, Badauni was a man of orthodox religious views, which he expresses in a very harsh and sometimes in irresponsible manner, in *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, while in *Najat-ur Rashid* he follows a very polished and scholarly style of writing.

Keeping this view into consideration, an attempt has been made to present socio-religious and intellectual atmosphere of Akbar's court as depicted by Badauni in the present study.

The first chapter deals with Badauni's personal life. He was born in a middle class family at Basawar in eastern Rajasthan. His father was in imperial service at a very low rank and died when Badauni was still a child. He was brought up by his grandfather. He received early education under the tutelage of his grandfather. For further studies he went to Sambhal and Amroha. He studied under a number of learned and spiritual men such as Hatim Sambhali and Shaikh Mubarak. He joined to the Akbar's court in 1573-74. This chapter greatly helps us in understanding his bent of mind and his views.

Chapter second examines Badauni's views and attitude about *Shias*, *Mehdvis*, *Nuqtavis* and *Raushania*. In *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, he was very critical towards *Shias* and used very harsh language for them. He believes that *Shias* were responsible in diverting Akbar from traditional Islam. But in *Najat-ur-Rashid*, his criticism of *Shias* is in a polished manner. His views about *Mehdvis* were very lenient, and he showed his reverence for *Mehdvi* divines. But he is extremely critical towards *Raushanias* and *Nuqtavis* and uses very harsh language for them.

The third chapter devoted to the Iranian intellectuals, who were admitted in large numbers in Mughal services during Akbar's time and played an important role in changing Akbar's religious views and social and cultural atmosphere of the court. The Iranian intellectuals who came to Akbar's court comprised of poets, physicians, scientists, architects, experienced administrators and also men of heterodox religious views. We have briefly discussed the biographical account of some of these intellectuals also. An attempt has been made in this chapter to present Badauni's perception towards these Iranian intellectuals.

The fourth chapter discusses about the *Ulema* at the court, with special reference to Maulana Abdullah Sultanpuri, Shaikh Abdun Nabi, Shaikh Mubarak, Abul Fazl Abdullah Sultanpuri and Shaikh Abdun Nabi who were prominent at the court of Akbar. But their mutual rivalries, their desire for power and wealth and their arrogant nature ultimately led to their downfall. On the other hand, Abul Fazl

and Shaikh Mubarak were the real architects of Akbar's policies. Badauni accuses Abul Fazl for distancing Akbar from traditional Islam and also for emphasizing the concept of rationalism. Abul Fazl and Shaikh Mubarak were of philosophical bent of mind. They have their own ideas about religion and sovereignty. Therefore we have also discussed their ideas in some details, in this chapter.

In the fifth chapter an attempt has been made to assess Akbar's reign in the light of the writings of Badauni, Shaikh Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi.

The sixth chapter focuses on *Najat-ur Rashid*. It is a very important work of Abdul Qadir Badauni. Unfortunately this book has not received much attention from the historians that it rightly deserves. It is imperative to objectively analyze this work and try to find answers to the questions about socio-cultural milieu. Moreover its study will also help us to understand many of the postulates of Badauni in the *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, for it not only supplements the information therein, but also provides the theoretical background of Badauni's stand on Akbar's religious and political views.

Thus, the present work seeks to elaborate the social and intellectual milieu of Akbar's court, which will also present the views of Akbar's critics and attitude of different religious personalities towards Akbar.



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This is to certify that the thesis **“Abdul Qadir Badauni and his Contemporaries and Socio-Cultural and Intellectual Milieu as Seen by a Critic”** by **Mr. Syed Salahuddin** is the original research work of the candidate and is suitable for submission to the examiners and for the award of Ph. D. degree.


(Afzal Husain)
Supervisor

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INTRODUCTION

Abdul Qadir Badauni's *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* is one of the most important sources of Akbar's reign. But his adverse comments on Akbar and his policies especially on his religious policy have been strongly criticized by a number of modern historians. According to Athar Abbas Rizvi 'he wrote to glorify the pettiness of his vision and stinginess of soul, of most hide-bound of traditional ulema'. Harbans Mukhia suggests that 'he wrote with a vengeance'. Generally his views are rejected, because he is perceived as a staunch fanatic. However without a close study of Badauni's works, no balanced history of Akbar's reign could be written. As a matter of fact Akbar's religious policy and its resultant unrest and social tension might have remained buried under the blandishment of master stylist Abul Fazl.

Unfortunately the historians have confined their assessments to *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* alone. His other works have either been completely ignored or only referred casually. Beside that Badauni had been portrayed as a fanatic *Mulla* whose views were extremely orthodox and irrational. Although besides being an accomplished scholar of traditional sciences, Badauni was also a great scholar of Persian and Arabic poetry, Mathematics, astronomy and music. It was indeed in recognition of his literary attainments that Akbar entrusted him with the translation of Indian classics like *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Atharveda* and *Rajtarangni*. Badauni was also

associated with the translation of a number of other books, in to Persian. In the compilation of *Tarikh-i Alfî*, also his contribution was quite significant. Above all he was an eyewitness of almost all the important events and developments that took place at the court. Being an important theologian and intellectual at the court, he was also in touch with people of different shades and opinion at the court. However, in almost all the important studies, his point of view about the social, cultural and religious condition of Akbar's court have not been generally accepted. Indeed Badauni was a man of orthodox religious views, which he expresses in a very harsh and sometimes in irresponsible manner, in *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*. However, in *Najat-ur Rashid*, he follows a very polished and scholarly style of writing. The language is simple and criticism wherever made is in a very polite manner.

Keeping this view into consideration, an attempt has been made to present socio-religious and intellectual atmosphere of Akbar's court as depicted by Badauni in the present study.

The thesis has been divided into six chapters.

The first chapter deals with Badauni's personal life. He was born in a middle class family at Basawar in eastern Rajasthan. His father was in imperial service at a very low rank and died when Badauni was still a child. He was brought up by his grand father. Badauni relieved his early education under the tutelage of his grandfather, for further studies he went to Sambhal and Amroha. He studied under a number of learned and spiritual men of his age

like Hatim Sambhali and Shaikh Mubarak. He was admitted to the Akbar's court in 1573-74. This chapter greatly helps us in understanding his bent of mind and his views. The main sources on Badauni's life are his *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* and *Najat-ur Rashid*.

The second chapter deals with Badauni's views and attitude about *Shias*, *Mehdvis*, *Nuqtavis* and *Raushania*. In his *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Badauni was very critical towards *Shias* and used very harsh language for them. According to him, *Shias* were responsible in diverting Akbar from traditional Islam. But in *Najat-ur-Rashid*, his criticism of *Shias* is in a polished manner. His views about *Mehdvis* were very lenient, and he showed his reverence for *Mehdvi* divines. But his extremely critical towards *Raushanias* and *Nuqtavis* and used very harsh language for them. The third volume of *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* is extensively used in preparation of this chapter. Apart from this the letters of Abul Fazl and Hakim Abul Fath Geelani, *Najat-ur Rashid*, *Akhbar Nama*, *Dabistan-i Mazahib* and *Alam Ara-i-Abbasi* have also been consulted.

In the third chapter we have discussed in detail about Iranian intellectuals, who were admitted in large numbers in Mughal services during Akbar's time and played an important role in changing Akbar's religious views and social and cultural atmosphere of the court. The Iranian intellectuals who came to Akbar's court comprised of poets, physicians, scientists, architects, experienced administrators and also men of heterodox

religious views. We have briefly discussed the biographical account of some of these intellectuals also. An attempt has been made in this chapter to present Badauni's perception of these Iranian intellectuals.

The fourth chapter deals with court *Ulema*, with special reference to Maulana Abdullah Sultanpuri, Shaikh Abdun Nabi, Shaikh Mubarak, Abul Fazl Abdullah Sultanpuri and Shaikh Abdun Nabi were the prominent at the court of Akbar. But their mutual rivalries, their desire for power and wealth and their arrogant nature ultimately led to their downfall. On the other hand, Abul Fazl and Shaikh Mubarak were the real architects of Akbar's policies. Badauni accused Abul Fazl of distancing Akbar from traditional Islam and for other emphasizing the concept of rationalism. Abul Fazl and Shaikh Mubarak were of philosophical bent of mind. They have their own ideas about religion and sovereignty. Therefore we have also discussed their ideas in some details, in this chapter. The role played by Shaikh Mubarak and Abul Fazl, in the expulsion of Abdullah Sultanpuri and Abdun Nabi from the court, also is the part of this chapter.

In the fifth chapter an attempt had been made to examine the assessment of Akbar's reign in the light of the writings of Badauni, Shaikh Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi. The sources used in the preparation of this chapter are *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* specially its second volume, *Maktubat-i Imam Rabbani*, *Akhbar-ul Akhyar*, *Zabdal-ut Maqamat*, and *Hazrat- ul Quds*.

The sixth chapter deals with the *Najat-ur Rashid*. It is a very important work of Abdul Qadir Badauni. Unfortunately the book has not received much attention from the historians that it rightly deserves. It is imperative to objectively analyse this work and try to find answers to the questions about socio-cultural milieu. Moreover its study will also help us to understand many of the postulates of Badauni in the *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, for it not only supplements the information therein, but also provides the theoretical background of Badauni's stand on Akbar's religious politics and views.

Thus, the present work seeks to elaborate the social and intellectual milieu of Akbar's court, which will also present the views of Akbar's critics and attitude of different religious personalities towards Akbar.

CHAPTER 1

ABUL QADIR BADAUNI: EARLY LIFE EDUCATION AND CAREER

Abdul Qadir Badauni the most controversial author of his time, was born on 21st August, 1540 (17th Rabi-us-Sani, 947 AH)¹, at Todah in eastern Rajasthan and brought up at Basawar.² As far as the family background of Badauni is concerned, there is no information available in any of the contemporary accounts. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* too provide us very little

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1. Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, ed. Ahmad Ali, Kabiruddin Ahmad and L. W. Nassau Lee, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1864-69, Vol. I, pp. 363-364.
 2. Ibid, Vol. II, p. 236; Badauni himself in the course of his journey from Amber to Imperial capital by the way of Basawar, mentions it as his birth place. There is difference of opinions among the scholars regarding Badauni's birth place. In the translation of first volume of *Ain-i Akbari*, Blochmann states, the Badauni was born at Badaun, a town in western Uttar Pradesh. *Ain-i Akbari*, Eng. tr. H. Blochmann, Vol. I, New Delhi, reprint 1977, p. 119, F.n.3; Same statement has been given by Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, in which he refers Badaun as, Abdul Qadir Badauni's birth place. "Personal History of Medieval Historians and their Writings", in *Historians of Medieval India* (ed.) Mohibbul Hasan, Delhi, 1968, p. 188; These opinions do not seems to be correct. Harbans Mukhia mentions Todah, in eastern Rajasthan as his birth place, and Bhusawar which is another town near Todah, where Badauni was brought up. *Historians and Histography during the Reign of Akbar*, New Delhi, 1976, p. 89; Athar Abbas Rizvi holds the same opinion. *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign, with Special Reference to Abul Fazl*, New Delhi, 1975, p. 279. Last two opinions fully corroborated with Badauni's own writing about his birth place.

information about his family. His father's name was Muluk Shah Ibn Hamid.³

It seems that Badauni's family belonged to the lower category of Imperial nobility. In 1559 his father along with leading nobles of the empire was sent to Sangram Khan to take possession of the fort of Ranthambore from him through peaceful negotiation.⁴ Although Badauni gives great importance to the role of his father in this deal, but Abul Fazl⁵ and Nizam uddin Ahmad⁶, who also wrote on this issue, did not mention the name of Muluk Shah, deputed to settle the issue. It would mean that probably Muluk Shah did not belong to higher echelon of the Mughal nobility. Apparently he was a lower ranking functionary and hardly merits any reference on the issue. However Badauni in his early age lived with his maternal grandfather, Makhdum Ashraf, who was in the service of Farid Tarin, a commander of five thousand, under Islam Shah Sur, at Bajawara, a dependency of Bayana.⁷

1.1 EDUCATION:

Badauni's early education began under the care of his maternal grandfather Makhdum Ashraf.⁸ Besides, he studied and gained knowledge

3. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 32, 252.

4. Ibid., p. 31.

5. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, ed. by Agha Ahmad Ali and Abdur Rahim, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1873-77, Vol. II, pp. 87-88.

6. Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabqat-i Akbari*, Naval Kishore, Lucknow, Vol. II, p. 249.

7. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 385; In 1548, Badauni in his childhood, visited Bajawara with Makhdum Ashraf.

8. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 64.

under most learned and pious men of his time, as mentioned in his *Muntakhab*. When he attained the age of the ten he studied the commentary on *Sahaif-ul Kalam* and *Tahqiq-i-usul-il Fiqh*, under Mian Abdullah of Badaun, who took him under his care and guidance.⁹ In 1552 at the age of twelve he went to Sambhal with his father and under the guidance of Shaikh Hatim of Sambhal, he studied *Qasida-ye-Burda*¹⁰, and some aspects of *Hanafi* doctrine.¹¹ Badauni called him as the prince of learned men and the ‘master of masters’.¹² On his suggestion, Badauni went to get instructions from Shaikh Abul Fath, the son of Shaikhul Hidayah of Khirabad¹³, and studied *Irshad-i Qazi*¹⁴, a book on Islamic teachings.

While studying in Sambhal, Badauni heard about the destruction and plunder of Basawar and adjoining areas by Hemu. His father’s library was also destroyed in this turmoil.¹⁵ These incidents took place in 1554 AD. In the same year he went to Amroha for further studies, and during his stay he came in contact with Mir Syed Muhammad, a family friend who later on became *Mir Adl* of Mughal Empire.¹⁶ Badauni returned from Amroha to Basawar in 1556 and met Shaikh Mubarak of Alwar who visited Basawar,

9. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 57.

10. A poem in the Praise of Prophet.

11. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 426-426 and Vol. III, p. 2.

12. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 425.

13. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 426.

14. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 286.

15. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 428.

16. Ibid., p. 426.

about the same time.¹⁷ In the year 1559, Badauni along with his father came to Agra to pursue his studies, and stayed at the house of Mihr Ali Beg.¹⁸ He also met Sheikh Mubarak at the residence of Mihr Ali Beg¹⁹.

Mihr Ali Beg requested Muluk Shah, to allow Badauni, to accompany him on his journey to Chunar.²⁰ Shortly afterwards, Badauni accompanied Mihr Ali to Chunar. He gives a detailed account of his journey to Chunar, and difficulties faced by him in the course of journey. He also mentions that during his stay at Chunar, he heard about Shaikh Ghaus, a famous sufi, who lived in cave and leaves and fruits of jungle, was his food.²¹

After returning from Chunar Badauni again studied under Shaikh Mubarak, along with his sons, Abul Fazl and Faizi.²²

From the study of *Muntakh-ut Tawarikh*, one gets impression, that Badauni developed a dislike for Abul Fazl and Faizi. In the later period when Badauni was at the imperial court, the rise of Abul Fazl and Faizi, and their remarks about traditional Islam filled him with jealousy and bitterness. However he gives considerable respect to their father and his teacher, Shaikh

17. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 110.

18. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 32.

19. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 74-75, 304; Badauni after his arrival at Agra studied under Shaikh Mubarak of Nagor, with his sons, Abul Fazl and Faizi.

20. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 32.

21. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 34.

22. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 304.

Mubarak, and admires his knowledge, but Shaikh's love for worldly comfort in his later life, has been criticized by him.²³

When he was in Agra, he also studied *Shamsiyyah*²⁴, and few other works, under Maulana Mirza of Samarqand²⁵, and Shaikh Azizullah whom Badauni calls as the 'master of perfection'.²⁶ The Shaikh taught him various books and treatises on Mysticism²⁷, around 1559.

Badauni, in a sense was very fortunate, that he lived in the time when heated exchanges between the Mehdavis and orthodox ulema were going on in the intellectual circles. Mehdavi scholars often emerged as winners in these debates. As a matter of fact Mehdavis had gained some support even among the orthodox ulema of the time.

During his stay at Agra, he had the privilege of meeting, Shaikh Abul Fath of Gujrat, the son in law of Syed Muhammad of Jaunpur and a staunch Mehdavi. Badauni received instructions from him in the ecstatic worship of Sufis.²⁸ He adds that Abul Fateh also disclosed to him the inner meaning of Quran.²⁹ In Agra he also came into contact of Shah Abul Mali, son in-law of

23. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 75.

24. A famous treatise on logic written by Najmuddin Umar bin Ali Qazwini in 13th century.

25. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 149.

26. *Sahib-i Kamal*.

27. *Rasayil-i Tasawwuf*.

28. *Zikr* or regular recitation of the name of the God.

29. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 47.

Prince of Bokhara, and a great scholar of *Hanafi* law.³⁰ He studied under him some chapters of *Sharh-i-Waqya*.³¹

From the reading of *Muntakh-ut tawarikh* one may gather this impression that Badauni was keenly interested in meeting the prominent Sufis and scholars of his time to enhance his knowledge of Islam. Regular attendance of Badauni, in the circle of Sufis and Islamic scholars, created greater scholarly qualities in him. He had firm knowledge of Quran and *Fiqh-i Hanafi* and *Fiqh-i Shafi*.³² He was well versed in all traditional sciences, and in spite the orthodox view which he possessed, he also acquired proficiency in other forms of cultural and intellectual activities which were considered undesirable by the vast majority of orthodox *ulema*. He does not refer to these activities and proficiencies directly, but he mentioned them in a letter addressed to Faizi, which he incorporated in his *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*. In a letter to Emperor Akbar Faizi writes:

“Mulla Abdul Qadir Badauni studied those traditional sciences which Mullas of Hindustan study...in addition to this accomplishment of learning, he had inclination towards poetry, and taste in prose composition, both Arabic and Persian. He is also acquainted with Indian astrology and Mathematics. He also has knowledge of Indian and Persian

30. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 49 and Vol. III, p. 150.

31. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 151.

32. Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Najat ur Rashed*, ed. Moinul Haq, Lahore, 1972, pp. 17-

music, and is not ignorant of chess, both two handed and four handed. He has also made commendable practice on Bin".³³

Badauni's competence in Arabic is also attested by the letter he wrote to Shaikh Salim Chishti.³⁴

Harbans Mukhia, a modern historian, is of the view that Badauni avoids making any reference to his knowledge of rational science and music, possibly, due to the antagonism which existed between rational and traditional sciences.³⁵ But this view does not appear to be wholly correct. because had it been so; Badauni would have not incorporated the entire letter of Faizi in his work.

After 1563, we do not find any reference of his formal education, either he had completed it by that time or he had to give up because of family problems. We are informed that his father Muluk Shah died in 1562,³⁶ and soon after his maternal grandfather Makhdum Ashraf also expired. He was now head of the family and to support his mother and younger brother he had to look for a job to support them. Perhaps these

33. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 304; This petition has been written by Faizi, when Badauni, due to his long absence from the court, was not allowed the audience of the emperor.

34. Ibid., pp. 12-14; W. Haig remarks in the translation of third volume of *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, that the letters written to Salim Chishti, by Badauni was more important for its style than substance: *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, tr. W.Haig, Vol. III, p. 22, f.n. 1

35. Harbans Mukhia, *Historians and Historiography during the reign of Akbar*, New Delhi, 1976, p. 89.

36. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 64.

circumstances and responsibility compelled him, to leave his formal education and decided to return to Basawar, though his meetings with pious and learned men continued.³⁷ Sometimes afterwards he came to Badaun (1564). While he was in Badauni, he met Shaikh Saleem chishti who visited Badaun at that time. It is earlier mentioned that Badauni also wrote a letter to him.³⁸

Badauni stayed at Badaun till 1565, and thereafter moved to Patiali, and in the same year joined the service of Husain Khan, the *jagirdar* of that town.³⁹

1.2 BADAUNI IN THE SERVICE OF HUSAIN KHAN

Husain Khan was an important noble of Akbar's reign and was *jagirdar* of Patiali. Badauni was greatly impressed with Husain Khan. He considered him a person who possessed qualities of a *Darvish*, as well as a brave military commander of orthodox views.⁴⁰ He served him for ten years. In 1568, the jagir of Husain Khan was transferred to Lucknow and Badauni

37. Before returning from Agra, he met few more religious and learned men, during 1562-63, he was honoured by Shaikh Ziyaullah, famous Sufi of Shattari order, According to Badauni Shaikh Ziyaullah explained inner meaning of Quran. Ibid, Vol. III, p. 121; Shaikh Ziyaullah was successor of Sahikh Muhammad Ghaus, about whom Badauni heard when, he was in the jungle of Chunar. Ibid, Vol. II, p. 34.

38. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 73 and Vol. III, p. 12.

39. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 64.

40. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 87.

too accompanied him to Lucknow.⁴¹ However, in between, for a brief period, he stayed at Agra, where he established extremely friendly relation with Nizamuddin Ahmad.⁴²

Abdul Qadir Badauni's keen interest in the company of religious and pious men, and reverence for them continued. In 1567-68, during his visit to Sirhind with Husain Khan, he got an opportunity to meet Abdullah Niyazi who gave some lessons from *Ihya'ul uloom*⁴³. He had also visited Kakori to pay his respect to Shaikh Bhikan of Kakori⁴⁴. Sometime in 1567-68, Badauni married second time. He did not mention about his first wife, but on his second marriage he quotes the Quran, 'and verily the future shall be better for thee, than the presents'.⁴⁵

In 1570, Husain Khan's *Jagir* was again transferred from Lucknow to Kanto Golah. In retaliation he rebelled and plundered Hindu temples,⁴⁶ so as to create disturbance and to show his displeasure. But soon he regretted and, paid homage to the Court, where he was pardoned by the emperor, and again Kanto Golah was reconferred upon him as *Jagir*.⁴⁷ Abdul Qadir Badauni did not accompany him to Kanto Golah and returned back to Badaun. In Badaun he had to suffer serious setbacks. His younger brother Shaikh Muhammad,

41. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 18.

42. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 99.

43. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 46; A famous work by Imam Ghazali.

44. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 24.

45. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 105.

46. Ibid., p. 125.

47. Ibid., p. 126.

who recently married, died.⁴⁸ His sorrow further increased, when his infant son Abdul Latif also died.⁴⁹

In 1571, he again joined Husain Khan. He was appointed as *Sadr* of the *Jagir* of Husain Khan, Shortly after reaching Kanto Golah, Badauni visited the tomb of Shah Madar of Kannauj, where an important incident took place. Badauni himself writes that he was infatuated with a young boy, and when relative of that boy came to know about it, they physically assaulted him. He received severe wounds in his hand and skull. He regrets for his improper act and felt satisfied with the punishment which he suffered. He also prayed that if he would recover from injuries, he would perform pilgrimage to Makka,⁵⁰ a wish which was never fulfilled.

Badauni soon after returned to Kantho Golah, and after that, accompanied, Husain Khan to Punjab, who had gone there in pursuit of Ibrahim Husain Mirza⁵¹. During his stay in Punjab, Badauni was fascinated to meet Shaikh Daud of Chati⁵², who resided in Shergarh a town in Punjab. Sheikh bestowed on Badauni, an auspicious cap and also sent a handkerchief

48. Ibid., p. 127.

49. Ibid.

50. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 136-137.

51. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 34.

52. Shaik Daud's ancestors came from Arab. Later on his family shifted to Chali, a Pargana in the district of Lahors. He got training in ecstaticism under, the Sufis of various, orders, during the time of Salem Sear, he was summoned by Abdullah Sultanpuri, who was Sadr of that time, to give explanation for his, such mystic activities, those apparently, appeared anti. Shariat. Ibid, Vol. III. pp. 28-32.

and a veil from his wife.⁵³ At the time of his departure Sheikh came out of his mosque and accompanied Badauni for some distance.

During his return journey from Punjab to Badaun he halted at Amroha, where he met Shaikh Aban, who predicted a calamity to him. When he returned to Badaun, he came to know about the death of his daughter.⁵⁴ In 1574, somehow, Badauni separated from Husain Khan. He does not mention the cause of separation, but feels, 'fortune played a dirty trick on him', and 'trucked a fatal blow at their friendship'. Badauni admits that a strong cause became reason for the rift. After recognizing his folly he apologized, and requested his mother to intervenes, but in vain.⁵⁵ At last Badauni had to leave the service of Husain Khan, and looked for another opportunity. He departed from Husain Khan, although his gratitude and affection for Husain Khan did not came to end. In 1576, when Husain Khan was very ill, Badauni visited him at Agra.⁵⁶ After the separation from Husain Khan he got a great opportunity, to get admission in the imperial court.

1.3 BADAUNI AT THE IMPERIAL COURT

Badauni after leaving the service of Husain Khan came to Agra, where he, was introduced to the court, by Jalal Khan Qurchi and Hakim Ainul Mulk.⁵⁷ About Jalal Khan Badauni says that he was one of the

53. Ibid.Vol. III, p. 35.

54. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

55. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 87.

56. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 219-220.

57. Ibid., p. 172.

confidential friends of Akbar.⁵⁸ About Hakim Ainul Mulk he says that ‘he held a very high rank among the learned’.⁵⁹ Jalal Khan recommended Badauni to Akbar with the words, ‘I have discovered an *Imam* for Your Majesty, whom you will be pleased with.’⁶⁰ Badauni writes that, soon after emperor asked me to engage in discussion with leading *ulema* at the court, and with his ‘natural talent and the sharpness of intellect... overcome most of them’. He further adds that he had not taken the help of Shaikh Abdun Nabi in approaching the emperor, and due to that, he was very much offended.⁶¹ He was also deputed to work of branding the imperial horses. Badauni complains that he was not given sufficient traveling expenses and was appointed *mansabdar* of only twenty, but notes with satisfaction that Abul Fazl was also given the same rank. He quotes Shibli, who said in respect of Junaid, ‘both baked in one kiln.’⁶² Akbar at that time was engaged in the struggle against *ulema*. Shaikh Abdun Nabi was chief *Sadr* and enjoyed such absolute control over *Madam-I-Mash*, grant as had not been

58. Ibid., p. 186.

59. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 164; Historians differ on the date of introduction of Badauni at the court. M.L. Ray Chaudhry states that Badauni, came to the court in 1573, *The Din-i-Ilahi or The Religion of Akbar*, New Delhi, 1985, p. 268; Sabahuddin Abdur Rehman gives the date of his introduction to the court, 991 A.H., that is 1583 A.D., Sabahuddin Abdur Rehman, *Bazm-i-Taumuriya*, Azam Garh, reprint, 1973, p. 185; Badauni gives the date of his entry at the court, as *Zilhijja*, 981 AH, that is April, 1574. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 172.

60. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 304.

61. Ibid., pp. 172-173.

62. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 206.

enjoyed by any another *Sadr*, during the reign of any ruler⁶³. He was so powerful at the court, that no one dared to challenge him. But when Shaikh Abdun Nabi crossed the limit, Akbar decided to act. The incident of execution of a Brahman of Mathura without seeking the permission of emperor became the reason of his down fall.⁶⁴ Another stalwart of the court was Makhdum ul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri. Abdun Nabi and Abdullah Sultanpuri, were strong competitor, and Badauni feels that 'they were responsible for the fall of the people's faith in the scholars of past and presents, ultimately resulting into the decline of orthodox Islam.'⁶⁵ In the discussion in *Akbarnama*, Badauni was used by Akbar to target the *ulema*. Badauni in his *Muntakhab* writes that by the natural talent and the sharpness of my intellect and courage, I overcame most of them.⁶⁶ Akbar found a suitable person, to control the group of *ulema*. He was very much happy when Badauni defeated Haji Sirhindi, an *Alim*, in the arguments.⁶⁷

Soon after his entry in the court, Abdul Fazl was also presented to the emperor, with his father Shaikh Mubarak.⁶⁸ Badauni admires Abul Fazl and says that 'The star of whose knowledge and understanding was brilliant.'⁶⁹ Abul Fazl was very much annoyed with court *ulema*, specially Shaikh

63. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 80.

64. Ibid., pp. 80-83

65. Ibid., p. 267

66. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 172.

67. Ibid., p. 173.

68. Ibid.

69. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 173.

Abdun Nabi and Abdullah Sultanpuri because once they have accused Shaikh Mubarak, (father of Abdul Fazl), and of being Mehdavi and due to their instigation the emperor ordered their expulsion from the empire. Shaikh Mubarak and his family wondered for a long time to secure themselves from the wrath of *ulema*. Abul Fazl could never forget the suffering of his family and when he entered the imperial service he got an opportunity to teach them a lesson. He used every method to humiliate them at the court in the presence of the Emperor.⁷⁰

Abul Fazl and Badauni, both were given the *Mansab* of twenty, but according to Badauni, Abul Fazl, by his intelligence and time serving qualities, was able to get promotion of two thousand.⁷¹ He also laments that due to his inexperience and simplicity he could not manage, to continue in the imperial service.⁷² It appears that he was not happy in the court, and complains for his nothingness and wanted to lead, a life of secluded retirement, and indulgence in the study and devotion.⁷³ Badauni had been appointed *Imam* of Wednesday prayer,⁷⁴ and around this time he was given, one thousand Bighas of land as *madad-i-mash*⁷⁵ Syed Mohammad *Mir Adl*,⁷⁶

70. Ibid., pp. 198-199.

71. Ibid., p. 206.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid., pp. 226-227.

75. Ibid., p. 206.

76. Sayyid Muhammad *Mir Adl* taught Badauni in Amroha, in 1554 Badauni also had some hereditary connection with him. (*Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. I, p. 426).

advised him not to accept *madad-i-mash*, and join the imperial service directly.⁷⁷ But he did not accept the advice of *Mir Adl*, and later on regretted on his decision.⁷⁸ Being disgusted and dissatisfied he represented to the emperor that it would not be possible for him to be present always in the court with such a small grant, on this he was promised that he will be given subsidies and presents during the marches.⁷⁹ Badauni says that he seldom received the promised presents,⁸⁰ and states in a poetic manner ‘I experienced what I experienced, I suffered what I suffered.’⁸¹ In 1576, Badauni applied for leave, but it was refused,⁸² but later on he was allowed to leave the court to visit, Husain Khan who was at that time in Agra, and was critically ill, due to wounds, which he suffered at the hands of enemies.⁸³ Soon after in Sikri, Badauni heard the news of death of Husain Khan.⁸⁴

In the same year (1576) he developed a desire to participate in the holy war, against Rana Pratap of Marwar.⁸⁵ Badauni sought permission from *Sadr Abdun Nabi* to accompany with the army which was ready to march

77. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 75-76.

78. Ibid., p. 78.

79. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 207.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 76.

82. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 206.

83. Ibid., p. 220.

84. Ibid., p. 221.

85. Ibid., p. 228.

towards Mewar. Badauni got permission of the *sadr* to participate in the holy war only after the intervention of Najib Khan.⁸⁶

The expedition proved successful and when Badauni come to court with the news of victory he was presented ninety six *Asharafis*, along with a pair of Shawl.⁸⁷ At this time Badauni and few others, were also but bitterness in the writing of Badauni, suggests that this promise, in his case, too was never fulfilled.

In 1577, Badauni due to severe sickness remained at Basawar,⁸⁸ and after rejoined imperial camp after a few months at Ajmer, where a general order was issued, that any one who desired to perform Haj may go on state expanses. Badauni like so many others also applied, but *Sadr*, Shaikh Abdun Nabi turned down his application, on the pretext that there was no one to take care of his mother.⁸⁹

In the same year at Rewari,⁹⁰ Badauni received the news of birth of a son. He requested the emperor to name the child. Emperor selected the name, Abdul Hadi, but with in six month the child died.⁹¹ From Rewari, he took leave of five months, and went to Basawar, but he remained there for

86. Ibid., p. 229.

87. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 236.

88. Ibid., p. 242.

89. Ibid., p. 251.

90. Rewari, a place presently in Haryana.

91. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 252.

one year. He states that this neglect of duty and machinations of enemies he fell from the eyes of the emperor.'⁹²

Sometimes, in 1579 after an absence of one year when he returned to the court, Qazi Ali was appointed *Sadr* in place of Shaikh Abdun Nabi. Qazi Ali cancelled most of the grants that had been assigned during the tenure of Shaikh Abdun Nabi. Badauni's own grant of 1000 Begha was reduced, by the emperor because he was not attending the court regularly. But Badauni is of the view that the grant was reduced not because of his absence from the court, but because he was not ready to follow his (Akbar's) religious views.⁹³ However on the intercession of Shaikh Abdun Nabi his grant of 1000 Beghas was reconfirmed. Badauni adds that he still did not want to stay at court, but on the advice of other courtiers he started attending the court regularly. On his plight Badauni writes, 'I fell again into snare' and 'The clever bird, when it falls into the snare, has to bear it as well as it can.'⁹⁴

In the year 1581, Badauni again over stayed at Basawar, admiring the beauty of a young boy, named Mazhari.⁹⁵ when the list of absentees at the court was drawn Badauni's name appeared among those who were absent from the duty. Nizamuddin reported him to be sick and sent him several

92. Ibid., p. 253.

93. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 274-276.

94. Ibid., pp. 275-276.

95. Ibid., p. 296.

letters to return immediately to court at Lahore.⁹⁶ But Badauni remained indifferent to the letters of Nizamuddin and after a long gap in 1581, he came to Fatehpur Sikri.⁹⁷

In 1588, Akbar entrusted, Basawar in Jagir to Shah Fathullah Shirazi, along with all the *Madad-I-Mash* land and therefore Badauni's *Madad-I-Mash* was transferred from Basawar to Badaun.⁹⁸ He again took leave and proceeded towards Basawar and thence to Badaun.⁹⁹ After one year Badauni returned back to the court.¹⁰⁰

In 1591, Badauni's mother died and on the request of Nizamuddin Ahmad he was granted leave to go to Badaun to console his family.¹⁰¹ Badauni says that at Badaun he fell ill and could not return to the imperial court for long time.¹⁰² When he returned back to the court the emperor was very angry with him and his plea, that he was ill, was not accepted by the emperor.¹⁰³ However after four or five months, on the request of Nizamuddin Ahmad and Faizi he was again reinstated.¹⁰⁴

96. Ibid., p. 297.

97. Ibid., p. 296.

98. Ibid., p. 368.

99. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 368.

100. Ibid.

101. Ibid., p. 377.

102. Ibid.

103. Ibid., p. 383.

104. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 384 and Vol. III, p. 304.

His regular absence from the court, indicate that after a time he did feel quite comfortable in the imperial service. At the time when Badauni joined imperial service, *ulema* had quite a dominant position. Akbar now wanted to curtail their power. Badauni, after being admitted in the service, participated in the debates of Ibadat Khana and along with Abul Fazl with his superior knowledge and debating skill completely vanquished the orthodox *ulema* of the court. Besides that due to their arrogance and rigidity in their views and unruly behaviour in the Ibadat Khana, they also lost favour of Akbar and were completely marginalized. According to Badauni they were banished, to Bengal and Bhakkar.¹⁰⁵ But Badauni, who himself was orthodox in his religious views could not cope with the situation, that, arose in the court after 1579. Badauni writes that discussion in the Ibadat Khana, became better, and controversies passed limits of differences between Shia and Sunni, and very basics of religion were attacked. He remarks that, 'the persons of navel and whimsical opinions got opportunities, and they created doubts in the minds of emperor, that after five or six years, there was not a trace of Islam left in him.'¹⁰⁶ For Badauni the situation at the court was now unbearable; he in his heart had no desire to remain at the court anymore but it seems his personal problems compelled him to continue in imperial service. However he remained absent from the court on one pretext and the other. He started regularly attended the court.¹⁰⁷

105. Ibid., Vol. II , pp. 277, 279, 300, 311 and Vol. III, p. 118.

106. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 255.

107. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 400 and Vol. III, p. 147.

In the last days of 1594 emperor ordered the Sadr to bestow the trusteeship of the tomb at Ajmer of Khwajah Moinuddin Chishti on Badaun. But Badauni states that, 'I have not been installed in the office.'¹⁰⁸ Badauni's *Muntakhab* concludes with events of 1595. After that we do not find any reference about him, also in any other contemporary account. It is generally believed sometime in 1595 or in the following year he died.

1.4 LITERARY WORKS OF BADAUNI

Abdul Qadir Badauni has been depicted as religious bigot, and this depiction, has overshadowed his versatile qualities. Badauni's talent may be understood through his numerous works which he compiled during the reign of Akbar. Besides writing *Muntakhab ul-Tawarikh*, *Najatur Rashid*, and few other original contributions, Badauni also translated a number of important works from Arabic and Sanskrit into Persian.

The first work which was entrusted to Badauni was *Singhsan Battisi*,¹⁰⁹ in 1574. With the help of a learned Brahman, he completed it in 1581-82.¹¹⁰ After the translation it was named, *Namah-I-Khirad-I-Afza*.¹¹¹ In 1577 or 1578, Badauni returned back from Basawar, and gifted to the emperor a book named *Kitabul Hadis*, comparing forty sayings of Prophet of Islam concerning the merit of holy war and archery.¹¹² The completion of the first millennium of Islam was drawing a close. On that pretext Akbar

108. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 147.

109. A series of thirty two tales, about Raja Bikramajit, the king of Malwa.

110. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 183-84.

111. Ibid., p. 184.

112. Ibid., p. 255.

issued an order in 1582 (990H) that a history of one thousand years of Islam be written. This book was named *Tarikh-I-Alfi*.¹¹³ A board of seven scholars which order Badauni was entrusted to compile this book. In the same year, Badauni was assigned the translation of *Mahabharata*, in Persian, which in translated form is known as *Razm Namah*.¹¹⁴ Thereafter emperor ordered him to translate Ramayana,¹¹⁵ This work he completed in 1589¹¹⁶. In 1591, emperor ordered Badauni to rewrite the history of Kashmir in easy language, which had already been translated by Mulla Muhammad of Shahbad. Badauni claims that his translation was kept in the imperial library as a model for scholars and other readers.¹¹⁷ About the same time Hakeem Humam¹¹⁸ represented to the emperor that *Majmaul Buldan*, an Arabic work should also be translated into Persian. The emperor once again entrusted

113. The account of first thirty five years of Islam was to be written collectively by seven persons – Naqib Khan, Shah Fathullah, Hakim Humam, Hakim Ali, Haji Sirhindi, Nizamuddin Ahmad and Abdul Qadir Badauni. The History after thirty fifth year, was written by Mulla Ahmad of Thatta. He brought the account, up to 1294. The rest of the work was completed by Asaf Khan Jafar Beg. He finalized this book in 1591, which was the completion of a thousand year of Islam. Badauni was asked to revise the work and collate it with other histories, *Tarikh-i-Alfi* consists of three volumes.

114. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p. 14.

115. Ibid., p. 336.

116. Ibid., p. 366.

117. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 374.

118. Hakim Humam's real name was Humayun, He came to India in 1576, with his brothers, from Gilan. Though he held the Mansab of only 600, but was an intimate friend of Akbar and had great influence on court.

along with ten or twelve scholars to translate the work, Abdul Qadir Badauni completed the translation of the portion assigned to him in one month.¹¹⁹ Just after the completion of this work, he went to Badaun. But after returning to court, he lost the favour of the emperor, apparently because, he had over stayed at Badaun. However at the request of Nizamuddin Ahmad, he was pardoned and ordered to translate *Jam-i-Rashid*, under the supervision of Abul Fazl.¹²⁰ Badauni translated only a portion of this work, but he does not mention the date of completion of the book. It seems that, this book was completed in 1592-93.

The last work which he was to translate was a Sanskrit work written in Kashmir. Regarding the translation of that book Badauni writes, ‘the emperor one day¹²¹ told Abul Fazl that Badauni was most appropriate person for the office of the trusteeship of Ajmer. He said yet since whenever I give him any thing to translate, he always writes what is very pleasing to me, I do not wish that he should be separated from me’. Badauni adds that ‘The Shaikh and others confirmed His Majesty’s opinion of me. That very day an order was issued that I should translate and complete the remainder of those Hindu lies, part of which had been translated by the command of Sultan Zainul Abidin of Kashmir, and named *Bahrul Asmar*.¹²² I was commanded

119. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p. 375.

120. Ibid., p. 384.

121. This event took place in 1595.

122. According to Low, it was *Rajtarangani*; *Munlakhab ut-Tawarikh*, tr. by Low, Vol. II, reprint, Patna, 1973, p. 415, f.n.2.

to finish the last volume of that book, in the course of five month.¹²³

Badauni completed it in 1595.

The first work written by Badauni by his own was a treatise, dealing with astrolabe. It comprises twenty chapters.¹²⁴ Another important work of Badauni was *Najat-ur Rashid*¹²⁵.

Najat-ur Rashid, was written by Badauni on the request of Nizamuddin Ahmad Bakshi.¹²⁶ It appears that Nizamuddin Ahmad wanted to write this book, but he decided to give this task to Badauni, and handed over whatever material he collected so far to him material Nizamuddin Ahmad had to him.¹²⁷ Some historians believe that, Nizamuddin dropped the idea of writing the *Najat-ur Rashid*, because he considered it improper for

123. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 401.

124. Ibid., pp. 292-293.

125. Modern historians have given their views about the contents and subject of this book. Harbans Mukhia is of the view that it deals with the problems of theology, mysticism, ethics and propriety of certain ceremonies. Mukhia op.cit, p. 110, f.n.5; Khaliq Ahmad Nixami states that *Najat ur Rashid* serves as an adjunct to Badauni's *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, every innovation of Akbar has been discussed by Badauni in *Najat-ur-Rashid*, without mentioning any direct reference to Akbar. K.A. Niami, *Akbar and Religion*, Idarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delhi, Delhi, 1983, p., 257; Athar Abbas Rizvi says that *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* is meant to destroy the faith of *Sunni* and *Najat-ur-Rashid* seeks to make principle on which *Sunnism* could be revived, thus each work supplements and complements to each other S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign*, op.cit., p. 285.

126. *Najat-ur-Rashid*, op.cit., pp. 1-2, 82.

127. Ibid., pp. 1-2.

an important functionary of the state to write a book of this nature. The content of the book may create problem for him.

Najat- ur Rashid was compiled in a very short time and completed in 1591.¹²⁸ This book contains seven chapters, including introduction and conclusion. All the chapters of the book deal with religious matters, such as sins, innovations in Islam, obligations towards God, socio-religious etiquettes and their different types.

Besides these afore mentioned religious problems, Badauni also advocates *Ijtihad* and logically proves it.¹²⁹ He also discusses about Shias and takes debates on the matter of disputes between Shias and Sunnis.¹³⁰ Apart from this he pays reverence to Saiyid Muhammad of Jaunpur,¹³¹ too, who claimed himself the promised Mehdi. Badauni keeps him on high pedestal

The conclusion of this book, discusses the correct method of repentance, and touches the religious and spiritual journey of a man.¹³²

Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh is the most important work of the Abdul Qadir Badauni. Badauni informs us that when he was translating the history of Kashmir from Sanskrit to Persian, he thought of writing *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, and started compiling the work in 1590-91. He was able to complete the work in 1595. It is

128. *Najat-ur Rashid*, op. cit., p. 531.

129. Ibid., pp. 37-38.

130. Ibid., pp. 118-124.

131. Ibid., pp. 82-83.

132. Ibid., pp. 508-528.

quite interesting to note that the work was kept secret during the reign of Akbar. After the accession of Jahangir when it came to his knowledge the work was confiscated. Badauni's son was arrested and book sellers were ordered not to sale its copies.¹³³ However it seems that several copies of the work were already prepared and these were used by contemporary historians in the preparation of their historical works.

Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the history of Sultans of Sultanate period. The second deals with the history of the reign of Akbar and the third part provides information about saints, physicians, poets and other intellectuals of sixteenth century.

A close study of *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* indicates that author relies heavily on the *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi* and *Tabaqat-i Akbari*. Besides these two works Badauni had also consulted a number of other works.

The first volume of *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* is a political history of sultanate period, written in chronological order. The author begins his work in traditional manner, starting with the praise of God and Prophet. Thereafter he writes the history of Subuqtgheen the Ghaznawide ruler and the ruler of Delhi Sultanate. But his presentation of history of the Delhi Sultane is in a very haphazard

¹³³. Khwafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, ed. Kabiruddin Ahmed, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1868, Vol. I, p.197.

manner. Although he had written about all the rulers and dynasties of Delhi Sultanate but in providing information about them he seems very selective. For example he discusses the reign of Sultan Nasiruddin in four pages. While the death of Prince Muhammad, son of Balban has been discussed in much detail and dedicated a long elegy to his death. He also devoted several pages on the poetry of Amir Khusro and Shamsuddin Dabir. Similarly several other religious men such as Sheikh Alai and Mian Abdullah Niyazi, a noted *mehdvi* divines were also given important place in this volume. The first volume of Badauni account is neither comprehensive nor analytical. It is a simple narration largely borrowed from other works.

The second volume of *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* is one of the most important sources of history of Akbar's reign, covering about forty years of his rule. Even in this volume, Badauni had heavily drawn on *Tabaqat-i Akbari*. There were two reasons for this. Badauni writes that he was not much interested in all aspects of the history of Akbar's reign. There are such issues in which he had no interest. These types of information he borrowed from *Tabaqat*. Secondly, he absented himself from the court on several occasions and sometimes his absence was for long duration. So for the account of that period, his main source of information was *Tabaqat*. Badauni's core interest was Akbar's religious attitude and policies followed in this regard. Almost all important development in this sphere took place in his

presence, and on many occasions he was not only an eyewitness, but a participant. Therefore, his observations in this connection are extremely important and for the study of Akbar's religious policy these portion of second volume are very useful.

This part of *Tabqat* begins with the coronation of Akbar in 1556 at Kalanur.¹³⁴ Further history till his entry into the court in 1573, is based on *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*. Badauni maintained chronological order. Events have been put under the head of years.

This book is a very bold piece of history and even he did not hesitate in stating the faults and mistakes, made by him. Badauni's acceptance of love for a boy, Mazhari,¹³⁵ is a very good example of it. This boldness also can be evidenced in another event narrated by him, about his infatuation for a boy in Qannauj,¹³⁶ when he was in the service of Hussain Khan.

When he joined imperial service in 1573, he was very enthusiastic, and this enthusiasm was used by Akbar for his purpose. Somehow Badauni became frustrated, and after that his writing appears a burst of anger and fury. His writing is very important source of religious atmosphere of Akbar's court, because he closely watched every development in the court except that period in which

¹³⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 1.

¹³⁵. Ibid., p. 296.

¹³⁶. Ibid., p. 137.

he was not present in the court. Some information provided by him about religious discussions in the court and Ibadat Khana are very unique in nature. These informations are very analytical and seem free from any pressure. Some informations can not be located anywhere except *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*. The innovations made by Akbar have been narrated in full details. He uses very harsh and sarcastic language for it. He uses abuses against those nobles whom he considered responsible for alienating Akbar from Islam. Abul Fazl, Faizi, Gilani Brothers, Birbal, Sharif Amuli, Makhdum-ul-Mulk and Abdullah Sultanpuri were specially target for abuses and Sarcasms. The account of by Badauni gives an impression that by the policies of Akbar Islam had declined and the believers were suffering. Badauni in this volume also gives his autobiography in a very scattered form.

This volume due to the anger and frustration can not be assumed as unbiased account. Though the events have been written under the headings of different years but also many events have been left on the promise of following them up in coming chapters. A number of claims by Badauni about religious experiments of Akbar seem an exaggeration.

The third volume of *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* is compilation of short notes on the lives of his contemporaries'. This volume has been divided into four subdivision or sections. First section deals with spiritual men of his time. Second deals with other learned men, third

with physicians, and the fourth with poets of Akbar's age. In his first two sections he deals not only with those *ulema* and *sufi* to whom he met, but also about number of *ulema* and *mashaikh*. He also makes comments about their piety, knowledge, religious views, and their achievements. This portion is full of small anecdotes.

The physicians of the Akbar's period have been given space in the third section. Badauni slates about their medicinal abilities, and admires them for their knowledge about medicine. He writes, 'they performed miracles like Musa and brought to mind the wonder working breath to mind like Isa'.¹³⁷ When he articulates the events related to the life of physicians, he emphasized on their personal qualities, after checking their moral and religious conducts. For Hakim Masihul-Mulk of Shiraz he states, 'he had disposition of a religious man and sound faith'.¹³⁸ About Hakim-ul-Mulk of Geelan he states, 'In the branches of traditional learning, also he was distinguished'.¹³⁹ This section is very brief and a very small number of physicians have been discussed.

The fourth and last section is related to the poets of Akbar's period. A considerable number of them were from Iran. Badauni derived information's for this portion from *Nafaisul-Maasir* of Alaud-

¹³⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol.III, p.161.

¹³⁸. Ibid., p.166.

¹³⁹. Ibid., p.161.

Daula Qazwini.¹⁴⁰ He also deals their religious ideas, ethics and personal conducts.

¹⁴⁰. Ibid., p.170.

CHAPTER 2

ABDUL QADIR BADAUNI'S VIEWS ON *NUQTAVIS*, *MEHDVIS*, *SHIAS* AND *RAUSHANIAS*

The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in India witnessed the growth of new sects with new religious approaches. The leader of these movements used all possible strategies to assume the role of renovator. In this endeavor they used old traditions and ideas in a new manner and zeal. The emergence of new sects cannot be understood by assuming these leaders of different sects as patients of hallucination, but it requires a socio-political study of their period. In this context Abdul Qadir Badauni's point of view would be presented along with the views of other contemporary and near contemporary scholars, of the period under study. Shias are also part of our study, though they were not part of newly emerged sects of fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

2.1 *NUQTAVIS*

Mahmud Basakhawani, the founder of the *Nuqtavi* sect was a native of Basakhawan, a village near Gilan in Iran and a contemporary of Timur.¹ Mahmud was author of number of religious and philosophical books. His main work was *Bahrul Quza*.² According to his philosophy, atom of dust (*Nuqta-i-Khaq*) is the origin of human life. Transmigration of soul was an

¹. Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, ed. Ahmad Ali, Kabiruddin Ahmad and L. W. Nassau Lee, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1864-69, Vol. II, p. 247.

². Ibid.

important aspect of his philosophical ideas. Adherents of Mahmud, who were generally called *Nuqtavis*, designated him as *Shakhs-i-Wahid* (the only one) and promised *Mehdi*. They considered their religion as a replacement of Islam in the new era.³

Nuqtavi considered sun as *Kabah* of Worship⁴ because the door of to *Kabah* is facing towards sun. They had a prayer, in which they chant with their faces turned towards the sun.⁵ They believed that when a person dies, and his body is buried into the earth, the components of body manifest themselves in the shape of minerals and vegetables, and these mineral and vegetables have intellect because energy of human body has transformed it to them. *Nuqtavis* regarded Mahmud Basakhawani as *Murakkab-i-Mubeen* (I am the vehicle of him who explains the truth.)⁶ Khaliq Ahmad Nizami is of the view that *Nuqtavis* through devious reasoning turned the *Murakkab-i-Mubin* into God.⁷

Accordingly, in the *Nuqavi* philosophy human body was progressing since Adam, and at last, it reached to its perfection in the form of Prophet Muhammad. From this form when perfection and purity further advanced,

³. Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umara* ed. Mirza Ashraf Ali, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1888-91, Vol. III pp. 289-90.

⁴. Mohsim Fani, *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, tr. Shea and Troyer, Lahore, Pakistan, 1973, p. 338.

⁵. Ibid., p. 341.

⁶. Ibid., p. 338.

⁷. K.A.Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, Delhi, 1989, p. 58.

then Mahmud appeared. They believed that most perfect portion of body of Muhammad and Ali, was mixed together, and they turned into the form of Mahmud,⁸ the founder of *Nuqtavi* sect.

Mahmud opined that life of earth is divided into certain periods of years, which is based on cyclical pattern. According to him first stage of the world, would be of eight thousand years. This would be age of superiority of *Arabs*. Another stage of eight thousand years would be superiority of *Ajam* (Persia). Sixteen prophets would come to this world. Eight of them would be from Arab and remaining eight would belong to *Ajam* (Persia).⁹ They believed that era of superiority of *Ajam* was about to begin and religion of Muhammad has been cancelled. Mahmud called himself *Wahid*, and declared himself *Mehdi*.¹⁰

Another source, namely *Alam Ara Abbasi* written in Iran contributes some information regarding religious and philosophical beliefs of *Nuqtavis*. According to *Alam Ara Abbasi*, *Nuqtavi* thoughts were opposite to Islamic fundamentals. They did not believe in hell and heaven neither they believe in resurrection of human bodies on the Day of Judgment. *Nuqtavis* even did not have faith in the Day of Judgment.¹¹

⁸. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, op.cit., p. 337.

⁹. Ibid., p. 339.

¹⁰. Ibid., p. 342.

¹¹. Iskandar Beg Turkman, *Tarikh Alam Ara-i- Abbasi*, ed. Iraj Afshar, Chap Khana Gulshan, Tehran, Iran, 1337 Solar, Vol. I, p. 476.

In the second half of sixteenth century *Nuqtavis* were persecuted by Safavid emperors and expelled from their homeland, Iran.¹² They came to India and found a safe haven at the court of Akbar. A very important *Nuqtavi* thinker, Sharif Amuli, who also came from Iran, joined the court of Akbar in 1576-77.¹³ According to *Alam Ara Abbasi* 'Sharif Amuli was one of the *Nuqtavi* leaders and was a great scholar who used very ornamented language in his discourses (*Jama-i Kamalat hamil-i Maqalat Muzkhar*). He also possessed a facile pen, but in the fear of wrath of theologians of age, he fled to India. Once he arrived in India the king and his grandees honoured him. He was accorded the treatment of a *Pir*.'¹⁴ Some Indian historical accounts also contain information about Sharif Amuli and his activities in India. Abul Fazl mentions him but hardly gives any detail about his religious beliefs. He simply tells us that Sharif Amuli was appointed *Sadr* and *Amin* of Kabul,¹⁵ in 1586, after the death of Mirza Hakim, the ruler of Kabul. Nizamuddin Ahmad, the author of *Tabqat-i Akbari* describes him one of the innovators of the age (*Mujedin-i Waqt*) who had a correct style (*Saliqa-i Durust*) in the sufi doctrine and was in the list of Amirs of one thousands horses'.¹⁶

¹². Ibid.

¹³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 246.

¹⁴. *Tarikh Alam Ara-i- Abbasi*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 476.

¹⁵. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, ed. Agha Ahmad Ali and Abdur Rahim, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1873-77, Vol. III, p. 477.

¹⁶. Khwajah Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Naval Kishore, Lucknow, 1875, Vol. II, p. 388.

Hakeem Abul Fath Geelani who was also a Persian and had been in the court, admired Sharif Amuli as a person, but criticized him for his unorthodox religious beliefs. He states, ‘in spite of his (Sharif Amuli) negligence of traditional Islamic sciences, depending upon his own research, Sharif Amuli thinks, that he has found out truth, and that he has reached the goal and found his way to the divine throne without waiting for the day of judgment. He finds no difference between friends and foes, wise and insane, relations and strangers’.¹⁷ I.H. Sidique considers the contents of this letter a reference of concept of *Sulh kul*.¹⁸ He infers this from the last line of the letter cited above.

In our present study we are especially concerned about Abdul Qadir Badauni’s attitude towards *Nuqtavis* and how did he receive the *Nuqtavi* intrusion in the Mughal court. However, from the above discussion one may draw a sketch of *Nuqtavis* and their religious philosophy notably their deviation from traditional Islam. Abdul Qadir Badauni, who belonged to the traditional bent of Islamic thinking, did not receive *Nuqtavis* and their ideas cordially. Besides that he accused him for the diversion of Akbar’s thoughts from his forefather’s religion. He uses very harsh language for Sharif Amuli. He writes:

“the reprobate apostate run from country to country, like a dog and turning from one to another, until he became a

¹⁷. Hakeem Abul Fath Geelani, *Ruqqat-i-Abul Fath Geelani*, ed. Muhammad Bashir Husain, Lahore, Pakistan, Letter No. 65, p. 150.

¹⁸. Iqtidar Husain Siddique, “Nuqtavi Thinkers at the Mughal Court: A Study of their Impact on Akbar’s Religious and Political Ideas”, *IC*, 1998, July, p. 70.

perfect heretic. He studied under vain fashion Sufism. In the Balkh his teacher was Maulana Muhammad Zahid ... He came to Deccan where he was disgraced. India being open field for licentiousness (*Ibahat*), where no one interferes with another business, he found a congenial atmosphere at Akbar's camp which he visited near Depalpur in Malwa, his followers mostly Iraqis, starting propaganda, that he was *Mujaddid* (renovator) for tenth century of Hijrah".¹⁹

Badauni depicts him as a person who had hostility against the prophet of Islam²⁰, and who ultimately became member of *Din-i-Ilahi*.²¹ Badauni through his writings leaves this impression that *Nuqtavis* were responsible for Akbar's desire to attain a supreme position not only as a ruler but also as a religious head. Badauni's claims do not seem merely the creation of his imagination, though it seems that his description of the religious conditions in the court was exaggerated. Hence, a careful analysis is required.

The arrival of *Nuqtavis* in the Mughal court surely impressed Akbar's religious ideology that already possessed liberal thoughts. In 1581, Sharif Amuli and others convinced Akbar that he was *Sahib-i-Zaman* or renovator of new era, who will remove all differences among the seventy two sects of Islam and Hindus.²² In the support of this argument, Sharif Amuli brought

¹⁹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 245-6.

²⁰. *Ibid.*

²¹. *Ibid.*, p. 248.

²². *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 295.

proofs, which he derived from the writings of Mahmud Basakhawani.²³ Another person Sani Khan of Heart, who was also a *Nuqtavi*, attempted to prove that Akbar was the person about whom Mahmud Basakhawani had prophesied.²⁴ Influenced by *Nuqtavi* thoughts of Akbar found more confirmation by the writings of his most intimate friend Abul Fazl. He depicts Akbar as *Farr-i-Izdi*²⁵ (light from God). *Farr-i-Izdi* of Abul Fazl seems a replica of *Sahib-i-zaman* of the *Nuqtavis*, though literal meanings of both terms are different, but their mission to create coherence and eliminate differences among human beings, appears to be the same idea. Scholars may have different views on the similarities between the two terms. But corroboration between thoughts of *Nuqtavis* and Abul Fazl, at least create a doubt in the readers mind, and give indications about Akbar's inclination towards ideology of *Nuqtavis*. Besides this, other sources too bespeak of *Nuqtavi* influence on both Abul Fazl and Akbar. According to *Alam Ara-i Abbasi* Saifuddin Kashi, who was a *Nuqtavi* thinker in Iran, and had been killed by Shah Abbas, had relations with Akbar and Abul Fazl and exchanged letters.²⁶ K.A. Nizami in the appendix of his book 'Akbar and Religion' published a letter by Akbar, borrowed from a manuscript entitled *Majmua*, addressed to Mir Saiyid Saifuddin Ahmad Kashi.²⁷ The contents of

²³. Ibid.

²⁴. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 207.

²⁵. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. Syed Ahmad Khan, Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh, reprint, 2005, Vol. I, p. 3.

²⁶. *Tarikh Alam Ara-i- Abbasi*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 476.

²⁷. K.A.Nizami, op.cit., Appendix No. XI, pp. 379-80.

the letter show Akbar's close link with Saifuddin Ahmad Kashi, whom he acknowledges as 'knower of Truth' (*Huq Shanas*), brave (*Qebla-i-Himmat*) and foresighted (*Doorbeen*). Emperor treated him as his ideological representative in Iran. Akbar asked him to inform regularly about his religious experiences and development. Akbar also asked to keep him well posted about the other members of *Nuqtavi* community in Iran.²⁸ This letter was written in 1584.

As mentioned earlier, in 1593 Saifuddin Ahmad Kashi had been executed by Shah Abbas.²⁹ After a year of the execution of Saifuddin Ahmad Kashi, a letter had been written by Akbar to Shah Abbas in 1594.³⁰ In this letter Akbar requested Shah Abbas to follow the policy of *Sulh-i kul*, so that the hearts of people of all sects could be pacified. Akbar also advised Shah Abbas that there were few farsighted and wise men (*Aqbat Been Wa Daniyan Kardidah*) in Iran and they should be included in administration.³¹ This letter does not give direct reference of *Nuqtavis* but Akbar's advice to Shah Abbas about adopting a policy of universal peace (*Sulh-i-kul*) and his comment on the scarcity of wise men (*Danishmandan*) in Iran, appears as an indirect support of Akbar for *Nuqtavis*. An important point in this regard is that this letter had been sent after the event of the execution of a *Nuqtavi*

²⁸. Ibid.

²⁹. *Tarikh Alam Ara-i- Abbasi*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 476.

³⁰. This date has been given in *Akbar Nama* with full details of letters; *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 656-61.

³¹. Abul Fazl, *Har Seh Daftar Abul Fazl*, ed. Mehdi Ali Khan, Bait-us-Sultanate, Lucknow, 1270 H., Vol. I, p. 21.

thinker in Iran. The term *Danishmandan*, used by Akbar, seems a reference of *Nuqtvis* or free thinkers.

However, Akbar did not openly denounce Islam but the above discussion clearly indicates that he was deeply influenced by *Nuqtavi* ideas, Abul Fazl's views about *Nuqtavis*, can be understood through an analysis of his attitude towards orthodox section of Ulema. It is generally believed that Abul Fazl developed enmity against orthodox Ulema due to his sufferings in teenage on the pretext of blame put on his father Shaikh Mubarak of having close links with *Mehdivis*. After his introduction in the court he found an intellectual support from *Nuqtavis* to teach a lesson to the *ulema* of the court, and was able to do so with the tacit understanding of Emperor who himself wanted to get rid of from the clutches of *ulema*.

Probably because of that Badauni believes that changes that took place in the religious thinking of Akbar were the result of *Nuqtavis* influence which ultimately led to degradation of Islam in the court. In this regard few references from the writings of Badauni presented here will be of some interest.

The millenary concept of Akbar, which was amalgamation of various religious ideologies, as mentioned by Badauni also mentions it, was an attempt of *Nuqtavis*, to prove Akbar as a *Sahib-i-Zaman* of the second millennium. Badauni also attached various anti-Islamic activities of Akbar to this millenary concept provided by the *Nuqtavi* thinkers. Badauni states that Sharif Amuli too attempted to prove Akbar that as *Sahib-i-zaman* and the

year of the emergence of *Sahib-i-zaman* was Hijri 990. To prove this, *Nuqtavi* thinkers brought evidences from the writings of Mahmud Baskhawani³² in which he made prophesies. Badauni writes ‘..and since in his majesty’s opinion, it was settled fact that 1000 years since the time of Prophet which was to be the period of continuance of the faith completed no hindrance remained to promulgation of those secret designs which he nursed in his heart’.³³ In the above lines Badauni has not used the term *Nuqtavi*, but the idea produced here is that ‘the time of prophet.... was now completed’, is actually a *Nuqtavi* thought. So here Badauni blames *Nuqtavis*, indirectly, ‘for promulgation of secret designs’ by Akbar against traditional Islam. A reader of *Muntakh-ut-Tawarikh* can feel that Badauni suggests through his writing that ‘millenary concept’ outlined by *Nuqtavis* was responsible for the steps taken by Akbar against Islam. He further tells us that as the date of completion millennium were drawing close, strange orders were passed which were against the tenents of Islam.³⁴ According to him *Zaminbos*³⁵ (prostration) was ordered, beef eating was declared illegal³⁶, Ulema were banished from the court³⁷, and marriage with cousin was prohibited.³⁸ All

³². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 287.

³³. Ibid., p. 301.

³⁴. Ibid., p. 301.

³⁵. Ibid., p. 301.

³⁶. Ibid., p. 304.

³⁷. Ibid., pp. 299, 301.

³⁸. Ibid., p. 306.

these developments, Badauni, discusses after mentioning about the millenary concept presented by *Nuqtavis*.

Another blame which he puts on *Nuqtavis* is that under their influence Akbar used reason and logic in religion which was not much liked by the orthodox *ulema* and ever since the time of Abbasid rulers heated debates between traditional *ulema* and philosophers continued. Badauni who himself represented the class of traditional *ulema* was not in favour of applying reason and logic in the religion. But Akbar laid great emphasis on reason and logic. Badauni writes that ‘whenever question connected with law of religion were brought up before Akbar, he said we only settle things which appeal to man’s reason’.³⁹ According to Badauni ‘a noble Azam Khan returned from Bengal and presented before Akbar. Emperor said to him that we found proofs for part of reality of metempsychosis and Abul Fazl will convince you of it’.⁴⁰ *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, also says that ‘Day of Judgment, and resurrection of human being were doubted’.⁴¹ Badauni’s endeavour to keep *Nuqtavis* behind this attitude of Akbar for religion, might be convincing because, logical attitude for religion, metempsychosis and refusal to the Day of Judgment were important ingredients of *Nuqtavi* thinking.

There are few contemporaries who also provide such informations which not only support Badauni’s view, but also give a justification, that

³⁹. Ibid., p. 308.

⁴⁰. Ibid., p. 300.

⁴¹. Ibid., p. 307.

everything recorded by Badauni was not mere creation of his thinking. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi expresses his opinion on this situation. In a debate with a person, about whom modern scholars believe that he was Abul Fazl, Sirhindi records 'I debated with a man who studied science of *falsifa*, learned from books of infidels, claims for himself *Al-fadelah-wa-al-fadl*, led people astray and went astray himself in the investigation of prophecy and its occurrence to a certain man'.⁴² This piece of information gives clues about *Nuqtavi* ideology. Such term like '*falsifa*' used in this para in other words can be taken as synonym of reason and logic. Sirhindi's writing tells about investigation by Abul Fazl' about 'occurrence of particular one' seems concept of *Sahib-i-Zaman*'. A foreign traveler Father Monserrate reflected about Akbar that 'he even declared that he was no musalman and gave no value to the creed of Muhammad and was follower of the sect which calls upon one God alone without a rival'.⁴³ It is easy to perceive that Monserrate's information about following by Akbar to a particular sect appears emperor's inclination towards *Nuqtavis*. Monserrate's views about Akbar and Islam might be an exaggeration, but they clear by indication about the ideological turmoil in the Mughal court, which shows deviation of Akbar from (Badauni's religion) traditional Islam, and in these happenings, role of *Nuqtavis* cannot be underestimated.

⁴². See for example Yohanan Friedmann, *Shykh Ahmad Sirhindi: An Outline of His Thought and a Study of His Image in the Eyes of Posterity*, Mc Gill Queen University Press, London, 1971, p. 5.

⁴³. Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate*, tr. J.S. Hoyland, Oxford, 1922, p. 173.

Abul Qadir Badauni was not ready to accept these developments in the court. His bitterness reached so much that he uses almost abusive language for *Nuqtavis*. He calls Sharif Amuli ‘a reprobate apostate running like a dog’.⁴⁴ He writes about Sani Khan of Heart who was a *Nuqtavi* that ‘the curse of God be upon him’.⁴⁵

By going through the writings of Badauni one would observe that his enmity further increased when he saw Sharif Amuli and Abul Fazl in close bound of friendship. Abul Fazl’s letters to Sharif Amuli are evidence of their mutual friendship.⁴⁶ Another evidence of intimacy between Abul Fazl and *Nuqtavis*, is in a note written by Badauni about Tashbihi of Kashan, a *Nuqtavi* thinker. He states “He (Tashbihi) also dedicated to Shaikh Abul Fazl, a treatise after manner of *Nuqtavi* sect.”⁴⁷

Now it is easy to sum up that Badauni was against *Nuqtavis* because they attacked traditional Islam, and tried to convert a Muslim king to their faith. Badauni went to the extreme extent whenever he made a reference of *Nuqtavis*. Some criticism of *Nuqtavis* thought and their interpretation by Badauni might have been a product of his own mind, generally his views about *Nuqtavis* have been supported by his contemporaries such as Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and Monserrate. He was brought up in an orthodox Islamic atmosphere and was irritated by the religious development at the court,

⁴⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 245.

⁴⁵. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 207.

⁴⁶. *Har Seh Daftar Abul Fazl*, op.cit., Vol. I, pp.141-47.

⁴⁷. *Ibid.*, p. 205.

caused by *Nuqtavis* and much other thinkers. But due to the fear of emperor he could not openly oppose them. At last he used writing as a medium to drain his fury and wrath.

2.2 MEHDAVIS

Ibn Khaldun in his *Muqaddamah* writes ‘it has been well known by Muslims in every epoch at the end of time a man from the family of prophet will make his appearance who will strength religion and make justice triumph’.⁴⁸ According to a tradition of prophet Mohammad, ‘the earth will be filled with injustice and crime, God will send a man from me whose name will be my name...who will fill it (World) with justice and equity as it had been filled with injustice and crime’.⁴⁹ Apart from this several traditions have been incorporated regarding the emergence of *Mehdi*, in several famous books of traditions such as *Al Tirmizi*, *Abu Daud* and *Ibn Majah*,.

Margoliauth writes that ‘the Christians, the Jews and Islamic system share the notion of an expected deliver, who is to come and restore or adjust all things’.⁵⁰ However, Quran does not inform about the advent of *Mehdi*, but there are traditions which forecast his emergence.

⁴⁸. F.Rosen, *The Muqaddama*, London, 1958, Vol. II, p. 156.

⁴⁹. See for example S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, Agra, 1965, p.70, The authority of Tradition is Qurrah Bin Iyaz.

⁵⁰. D.S. Margoliauth, “Mehdi and Mehdivism”, Cf. S. A. A. Rizvi “Mehdvi Movement in India”, *Medieval India Quarterly*, Vol. I, No. 1, July 1950.

Both Shias and Sunnis accept the concept of *Mehdi*, though Shias, believe that he is born but he is in veil, and would appear when time will come. Sunni scholars on the other hand are of the view that he will be born and will be recognized by pious men of the time.

In different parts of the Islamic world, many persons claimed themselves as 'promised *Mehdi*'. In India this occurred first during the reign of Firoz Shah. A person named Rukn claimed himself as '*Mehdi*', but he could not gain sufficient support from general masses and was executed on the orders of Sultan Firoz Shah.⁵¹ Another person who claimed himself *Mehdi* was Saiyid Muhammad of Jaunpur.

Saiyid Muhammad was born in Jaunpur. He studied Islamic sciences under the guidance of a Chishti Sufi, Shaikh Daniyal. Early in his youth he began preaching and mobilized the masses to return towards the real Islamic spirit.⁵² Adverse circumstances compelled Saiyid Muhammad to leave Jaunpur. However he proceeded towards Mecca and on reaching there along with a large gathering of his disciples, he declared himself *Mehdi*.⁵³ He again proclaimed himself as promised *Mehdi* after his return in Ahmadabad.⁵⁴ The orthodox section of *ulema* did not accept his claim and

⁵¹. Firoz Shah Tughlaq, *Futuh-i-Firoz Shahi*, ed. Shaikh Abdur Rashid, Aligarh, 1954, pp. 7-8.

⁵². Saiyid Shamsuddin Mustafi, *Mehdvi Tahrik*, Karachi, 1956, pp. 13-15; Author is an adherent of Mehdvi doctrine.

⁵³. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 319 and Vol. III, p. 45.

⁵⁴. See for S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, op.cit., p. 87.

consequently, Saiyid Muhammad had to suffer much hardship. He had to shift from one place to another, and at last at Farrah in Afghanistan, he died in 1505.⁵⁵

After the death of Saiyid Muhammad, his movement was carried on by his followers; however, by the end of the 16th century the *Mehdvi* movement lost its momentum and declined. The basic idea of *Mehdivism* was their firm belief that Saiyid Muhammad was the 'promised *Mehdi*'. Though the concept was known to the Sunni *ulema*, despite pity, spiritualism, devotion to *Shariat*, and ecstatic way of life of *Mehdvi* adherents, their religious ideas were not convincing to *ulema*. So *Mehdvis* were severely dealt by the traditional sunni *ulema*, especially during the period of Surs.⁵⁶ Even during the time of Akbar they could not escape from the wrath of Sunni *ulema*. Mohammad Tahir, the famous sunni *Alim* of sixteenth century declared under oath to vanquish whole *Mehdvi* doctrine. After the conquest of Gujarat when Muhammad Tahir came to meet Akbar, he also assured him to destroy this sect.⁵⁷ Mir Alauddaula Qazwini, an early contemporary of Akbar writes, 'Akbar stayed for a week at Patan for the amelioration of the condition of meek and downtrodden and the eminent

⁵⁵. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 320 and Vol. III, p. 46.

⁵⁶. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 395-403; Abdullah Niyazi and Shaikh Alai who were famous *Mehdvi* leaders, had to suffer hardship by the court *ulema*.

⁵⁷. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Lucknow, Vol. III, 1994, p. 37.

ulema, and for popularizing the *shariat* of Islam, which was in terrible mess on account of heretic *Mehdvis*'.⁵⁸

Khwajah Nizamuddin Ahmad and Abdul Qadir Badauni's account express their sympathies for *Mehdvi* leaders, but contrary to this, Abul Fazl presents the claim of Saiyid Muhammad as a psychological disorder⁵⁹, inspite of the general belief that his father Shaikh Mubarak once was a *Mehdvi* adherent.

In our study we will survey the sufferings of *Mehdvi* leaders provided by Badauni, his personal attitude towards *Mehdvism* and also Akbar's response to *Mehdvism*. Abdul Qadir Badauni gives brief accounts of the life of same prominent *Mehdvi* leaders and their encounters with royal authority

SHAIKH ALAI

Sheikh Alai was son of Sheikh Hasan of Bengal who migrated from Bengal to Bayana, where he settled down. Sheikh Alai succeeded his father after latter's death and when he came into the contact of Abdullah Niyazi, he accepted the *Mehdvi* ideology.⁶⁰

⁵⁸. Mir Alauddaula Qazwini, *Nafais-ul-Maasir*, (M.S.) Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, p. 102; see also S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, op.cit., p. 115, f.n.2.

⁵⁹. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 213.

⁶⁰. For example S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, op.cit., pp. 124-25.

Badauni narrates that Shaikh Alai was summoned by Islam Shah Sur in his court. Makhdumul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri who was employed at an important position at the court, tried his best to convince Islam Shah that Shaikh Alai was a rebel and as he had claimed to be *Mehdi* his continued presence in the city would lead to confusion. The *ulema* in their discussion with Sheikh Alai miserably failed to prove their point of view. Now the *ulema* of the court persuaded Islam Shah Sur against Shaikh Alai. However, under the pressure of *ulema* he was banished to Hendiya.⁶¹ After some time he was again summoned to the court and Shaikh Budha, an eminent sufi of the time was ordered to enquire about Shaikh Alai's beliefs. In the course of discussion with Sheikh Alai, Shaikh Budha was greatly impressed of his knowledge and piety and wrote a letter in the favour of Sheikh Alai to Islam Shah. But apparently by the mechanization of court *ulema* the letter could not be communicated to the Islam Shah. These elements combined together and forced Sheikh Alai to leave his faith and when he denied doing so, they persuaded Islam Shah was persuaded to punish him. Islam Shah at their instance ordered the Sheikh to be whipped and in course of whipping he died.⁶²

SHAIKH ABDULLAH NIYAZI

Badauni account of Shaikh Abdullah, a Niyazi Afghan and a disciple of Shaikh Saleem Chishti reflects the hardship suffered by Mehdavis,⁶³ He

⁶¹. A place presently in Madhya Pradesh.

⁶². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 396-409.

⁶³. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 45.

sought permission from Shaikh Saleem for pilgrimage to Mecca. During his journey, he came in contact with the followers of Saiyid Muhammad Jaunpuri. Their piousness, belief in God and mannerism, impressed Shaikh Abdullah Niyazi so much that he became an adherent of *Mehdvi* doctrine. In 1548 when Islam Shah Sur was marching against Niyazi Afghans, and halted at a Bahsur a place near Bayana, Makhdum ul Mulk who was with Islam Shah poisoned the ears of Islam Shah against Abdullah Niyazi who at that time was staying in the environs of Bahsur. Islam Shah summoned Abdullah Niyat, at the royal camp and on being presented before the sultan; Abdullah saluted him in simple Islamic way ignoring completely manners of courtly etiquettes. Islam Shah got angry and ordered him to be severely punished and the treatment was so harsh that he almost died. However, he was saved by some sort of traditional cure.⁶⁴

Badauni provides us information about few other *Mehdvi* scholars such as Shaikh Abul Fath⁶⁵ and Miyan Mustafa of Gujrat⁶⁶. Miyan Mustafa would be discussed when Akbar's attitude for *Mehdvis* would come under consideration.

Before analyzing Akbar's response to mehdvism it will be better to know the Abul Fazl's views about *mehdvism* and *mehdvis*, the most intimate friend and advisor of Akbar.

⁶⁴. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 404-405.

⁶⁵. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 47-8.

⁶⁶. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 50-51.

ABUL FAZL AND MEHDVISM

Abul Fazl's views about *mehdvism* and *mehdvis* are unclear and confusing. About Saiyid Muhammad of Jaunpur he writes that 'he was learned in spiritual and secular knowledge'⁶⁷ but in the same paragraph he adds that 'carried away by his extravagance he laid claim to be a *Mehdi*'.⁶⁸ The term 'extravagance' has been translated from the original word '*Shoridgi*' which is also used for madness.⁶⁹ Like his other reference about *mehdvis* are mutually inconsistent. He admires the persons who were adherent of *mehdvism* but he was not convinced with the basic ideology of *mehdvis*. He writes 'There is a sect in India who regarded Mir Saiyid Muhammad Jaunpuri as the predicted *Mehdi* and go to the extreme extents in this assertion and forgetting the other demonstration of this mission, besides doctrine, works and other blameless moral conducts'.⁷⁰ Thus, it is clear that Abul Fazl was not convinced with claim of *Mehdvis* but their moral conduct was admirable for him.

Shaikh Alai during the time of Islam Shah Sur visited Agra to meet Abul Fazl's father Shaikh Mubarak and contradiction in Abul Fazl's account appears again. On the one hand he considers Shaikh Alai was

⁶⁷. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 213.

⁶⁸. Ibid.

⁶⁹. F. Stingass, *Persian-English Dictionary*, New Delhi, 1973, p. 766.

⁷⁰. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 213.

irreproachable in his character and conduct'⁷¹ and on the other hand he feels that 'he (Shaikh Alai) fell into this (mehdvism) whirlpool (*wartah*)'.⁷² Although Abul Fazl was convinced with the spiritual qualities of Shaikh Alai but in his eyes *mehdvism* was a 'whirlpool'.

Shaikh Mubarak was once blamed by *ulema* to be a *mehdvi* devotee. But Abul Fazl strongly rejects the contention of *ulema*. In this connection Abul Fazl writes, 'his father due to his attitude of independent thoughts and not persuading the conventionality, accused by *ulema* of that time of attachment to the *mehdvi* doctrine and uttered the most absurd fictions'.⁷³ According to Abul Fazl, Shaikh Mubarak's support to Shaikh Alai in his debates with the *ulema* of the court of Surs, became a reason to prove Mubarak as an ally of *mehdvism*.

Now these contradictions in the writings of Abul Fazl should be judged from another angle. Abul Fazl was a sympathizer of *mehdvis* because they were like his own family members were persecuted by the *ulema* of the court of Sur rulers. Though, Saiyid Muhammad himself never came in to contact of Sur ruler, he was hounded by the orthodox section of the *ulema*. Hence, he could also gain sympathies of Abul Fazl. But his criticism of the basic ideas of *mehdvis* and his attempts to present his father, not as a *Mehdvi* partisan might be due to the *Mehdvis*' self styled orthodoxy and their

⁷¹. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 249; In his a letter Abul Fazl uses same language. *Har Seh Daftar Abul Fazl*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 242.

⁷². *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 249.

⁷³. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 249.

rebellious attitude against the state. The assertion of Abul Fazl that his father was not a *Mehdvi*, seems to be quite correct, because it was Mirza Aziz Koka, a senior noble of Akbar and believed to be an orthodox Muslim, who interceded on behalf of Shaikh Mubarak who was accused of being a *Mehdavi* by court *ulema*, requested Akbar to pardon him. It may also be pointed out that Mirza Aziz Koka was very much against the *Mehdvis*, and during his governance of Gujrat, he dealt very harshly with *Mehdvis*. How can a person who was so much opposed to the *mehdvis*, would support a *Mehdvi* adherent against orthodox *ulema*.

AKBAR AND MEHDVISM

We have mentioned above that for the first time Akbar came in to contact of *Mehdvis* during his conquest of Gujrat. In 1574, when Akbar was in Ajmer he summoned Shaikh Mustafa, an eminent *mehdvi* leader to the court and the latter was brought from Gujrat to the Ajmer. When Akbar proceeded from Ajmer to Fatehpur Sikri, Miyan Mustafa also accompanied him. At both the places debates took place between the court *ulema* and Shaikh Mustafa, on the question of genuineness of the *mehdvi* doctrine.⁷⁴ These debates have been recorded in '*Majalis*' an account prepared by Mujaan Mustafa. Badauni also provides some information in the context.⁷⁵ These sources show that Akbar had consideration for Miyan Mustafa. One important reason for his sympathies for *mehdvis* or Miyan Mustafa was that

⁷⁴. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 50-51.

⁷⁵. *Ibid.*

in the same year Shaikh Mubarak along with his son had re-entered the imperial court. As discussed earlier, that they were considered as sympathizers of *Mehdvis*. Apparently they did not play any role in these debates, because they were accused of being *Mehdavi* or have only recently rejoined the court after being pardoned. But they surely would have influenced the thoughts of Akbar regarding *Mehdvis* and Miyan Mustafa. Shaikh Mubarak also had entered into lengthy correspondence with Miyan Mustafa.⁷⁶ Akbar's sympathetic demeanour, for *Mehdvis* would be more understandable and clear through a presentation of Miyan Mustafa's *Majalis*, a record of discussion in the court.⁷⁷ In his conversation with *ulema* Miyan Mustafa tried to depict *Mehdvism* as mystical order and *Mehdi* as a *Pir*. He also tried to de-emphasize the political role of early *Mehdvis* like Saiyid Khwandmir, who was in Gujrat and Shaikh Alai.⁷⁸ According to *Majalis* in the course of discussion Shaikh Mustafa asked to Akbar 'what

⁷⁶. Derryl N. Maclean "Real Men and False Men at the court of Akbar: The Majalis of Shaikh Mustafa Gujrati", Article published in *Beyond Hindu and Turks*, ed. David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence, New Delhi, 2002, p. 199.

⁷⁷. For details see Derryl N. Maclean "Real Men and False Men at the court of Akbar: The Majalis of Shaikh Mustafa Gujrati", *Ibid.*; In this article, some parts of *Majalis*, have been utilized in translated form. Before this, one should keep in mind a very interesting fact that Akbar built *Ibadat Khana* on the deserted hospice of Abdullah Niyazi who also had joined the *mehdvi* community.

⁷⁸. Derryl N. Maclean "Real Men and False Men at the court of Akbar: The Majalis of Shaikh Mustafa Gujrati", *Ibid.*, p. 204.

would you do, if someone were to say that Moinuddin Chishti was sinful'.⁷⁹ Akbar replied 'I will say him infidel and slay him with my own hands'.⁸⁰ Miyan Mustafa replied 'In the same way the *Pir* of this servant is the *Mehdi* of last days'.⁸¹ It seems Miyan Mustafa deliberately made an attempt to prove *Mehdvism* as mystical order and *Mehdi* as a *Pir* of it. It was also an endeavour of Miyan Mustafa to distance his group from the early anti-state activities of *Mehdavis* because Sufi orders (*silsilah*) generally were neutral regarding the matter of state. He also wanted to gain support of Akbar.

When Miyan Mustafa arrived at the court, the attitude of Akbar was in transition and his thoughts were shifting from orthodoxy to free thinking. The Emperor was extremely unhappy with orthodox *ulema* and was looking for an opportunity to curtail their power and influence. In this debate Miyan Mustafa accused *ulema* as pursuers of worldliness and termed them of being effeminate. Mustafa used verses of *Quran* and logic to prove them effeminate (*Na Mard, Mukhannas*).⁸² According to Mustafa since *ulema* are not real men (*Na Mard*), so they are not legitimate witness to decide whether Mehdi had arrived or would arrive.⁸³ Not only this, Miyan Mustafa also

⁷⁹. For *Majalis*, also see Derryl N. Maclean "Real Men and False Men at the court of Akbar: The Majalis of Shaikh Mustafa Gujrati", *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁸⁰. Derryl N. Maclean "Real Men and False Men at the court of Akbar: The Majalis of Shaikh Mustafa Gujrati", *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁸¹. *Ibid.*

⁸². Derryl N. Maclean "Real Men and False Men at the court of Akbar: The Majalis of Shaikh Mustafa Gujrati", *Ibid.*, pp. 206-7.

⁸³. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

argued that these falsemen (*Na Mard*) are like asses that carry books on their backs. They possess the knowledge (*Ilm*) but do not act (*amal*) according to it.⁸⁴ Shaikh Mustafa denied to participate in congregational prayers, because Abdun Nabi was leader (*Imam*) of the prayer, and in Shaikh Mustafa's point of view he was a false man (*Na Mard*) or an effeminate, and pray under the leadership of a effeminate was not permissible.⁸⁵ These arguments against orthodox court *ulema* especially against Abun Nabi, surely would have appeased Akbar, and he would have gotten clues from it to undermine the strength of clergy of the court.

Another *mehdvi* scholar to whom Akbar met was Shaikh Abdullah Niyazi. He was invited to participate in Ibadat Khana's debates.⁸⁶ During the course of his presentation he pointed out that earlier he was inclined to the doctrine of *Mehdvism* but truth revealed to him and he had given up that faith.⁸⁷ In 1585, when Akbar was his way to Atak and reached Sirhind, he again met Abdullah Niyazi. He showed him great respect and offered some *Madad-i-Mash* which he accepted reluctantly.⁸⁸

BADAUNI AND MEHDVISM

It seems now important to discuss Badauni's views of *Mehdavisim* especially in the context of the suggestion made by some modern historians

⁸⁴. Ibid., p. 208.

⁸⁵. Ibid., pp. 208-9.

⁸⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 45.

⁸⁷. Ibid., p. 46.

⁸⁸. Ibid.

that Badauni himself was a *Mehdavi* needs to be looked afresh. We will particularly examine Badauni's *Nijat-ur Rashid* in this context.

In the *Najat-ur Rashid*, he gives a very short life sketch of Saiyid Muhammad of Jaunpur.⁸⁹ He presents him as a saint with very high spiritual qualities. According to Badauni, Saiyid Muhammad's teachings were according to Quran; he was unique in sufistic pattern and got spiritual teachings directly from Khizr⁹⁰, without any mediator.⁹¹ Whenever Badauni mentions his name, he uses a prefix – 'May God sanctifies his holy resting place'⁹² which is generally used by a devotee for his *Pir*. Several other references about *Mehdvis* have similar expressions. Shaikh Alai, Abdullah Niyazi, Miyan Mustafa and Shaikh Abul Fath of Gujrat, all of whom were prominent *Mehdvis*, got place in Badauni's writings, as highly spiritual dignitaries. He also got opportunity to meet some of them.

In his early age Badauni was taught some religious teaching, by Abul Fath of Gujrat, who was son in-law of Saiyid Muhammad of Jaunpur.⁹³ According to Badauni, 'I received instructions (from him) in ecstatic

⁸⁹. Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Najat-ur-Rashid*, ed. Moinul Haq, Idarah Tahqiqat Pakistan, Lahore, 1972, pp. 77-81.

⁹⁰. A spiritual person mentioned in Islamic traditions. Various *Sufi* orders believe him a source of spiritual *Sufistic* learning.

⁹¹. *Najat-ur-Rashid*, op.cit., p. 77.

⁹². *Najat-ur-Rashid*, Ibid.; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 399 and Vol. III, pp. 45, 47, 50, 67.

⁹³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. III, p. 47.

worship of Sufis... and inner meaning of *Quran* disclosed to me'.⁹⁴ This statement of Badauni is an evidence of his closeness with a *Mehdvi* saint. When Sheikh Mustafa arrived in the court to defend himself in front of the court *ulema* on the issue of the authenticity of *mehdvism*, Badauni made some queries to him regarding the matter. It appears that Badauni considered it as impertinence to Sheikh Mustafa, and regretted, that is why, he states 'since I said was opposed to the Sheikh's contention, it was evidently the cause of his annoyed with me... To make amends for my faults, I waited on him, with my apologies and asked him for forgiveness'.⁹⁵ This statement and behaviour of Badauni is another example of his gratitude and reverence for *mehdvi* leaders.

Language and attitude which he adopted for *Mehdvis*, reveals his inclination for Mehdvism. But there are some other evidences which suggest the opposite.

A very important aspect in this context is that Badauni never directly accepted that he is a follower of Saiyid Muhammad's doctrine. He never claimed to be a *mehdvi* in *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, which represents his extremely bold ideas and the second volume in particular, which is an example of burst of his fury and anger. If he had been a believer of Mehdvism completely then, he might have declared it as it would have remained a secret as many others which are only revealed in his writing..

⁹⁴. Ibid.

⁹⁵. Ibid., p. 51.

Apart from this, Badauni also keeps other Sufis from different religious order on high pedestal. These Sufis of our period were not admired by *mehdvis*, because a large number of them were critical to *mehdvism*. So Badauni's attachment does not lead us to believe that he was an adherent of *mehdvism*. But it seems that he assumed Mir Saiyid Muhammad Jaunpuri as a *pir* of a mystic order. This theory becomes more affirm, by the discussion between Badauni and Miyan Hatim Sambhali. He says 'Miyan (Hatim) said.. they say that he (Shaikh Mubarak) holds the Mehdivi doctrine ? I (Badauni) said he believes Saiyid Muhammad Jaunpuri to have been a great saint, but does not believe him as a *Mehdi*'.⁹⁶ Aforesaid discussion is about Shaikh Mubarak's religious believes but actually it is a reflection of Badauni's ideas about *mehdvis*. He viewed the *mehdvis* as group of saintly peoples and Saiyid Muhammad as its *pir*.

Besides, Badauni some other scholars like Miyan Jamaluddin and Miyan Hatim Sambhali who were not among the *Mehdvis*, praise the piety and learning of Saiyid Muhammad.⁹⁷ Maulana Azad, a modern scholar gives few names of non-*Mehdivi* sunni orthodox personalities, who somehow praised Saiyid Muhammad. These were Shaikh Daud, Shaikh Abdul Qadir, Shaikh Wajihuddin Gujrati⁹⁸ and Shaikh Ali Muttaqi⁹⁹. Shaikh Abdul Huq

⁹⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 67.

⁹⁷. For example S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, op.cit., p. 76.

⁹⁸. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *Tazkirah*, Lahore, 1982, p. 46.

⁹⁹. Ibid.; Shaikh Ali Muttaqi wrote a treatise against the exaggeration of *Mehdvis*, but he also admired the spiritual qualities of Syed Muhammad of Jaunpur.

Muhaddis Dehlvi, who was also critical of *mehdvi* ideology, and was a contemporary of Badauni, also approved of the religious qualities of prominent *Mehdvis*, like Shaikh Ilehdad¹⁰⁰ and Shaikh Burhan of Kalpi.¹⁰¹

The admiration of *mehdvis*, by non-*Mehdvi* Sufi and *ulema*, does not prove them as followers of Saiyid Muhammad Jaunpuri. In the same way, the admiration of Abdul Qadir Badauni of *mehdvi* leaders does not provide any concrete testimony of him being a *mehdvi* adherent. Now it is easy to summarize Badauni's attitude for *Mehdvis*. The piousness, their critical approach for state and wordly *ulema*, their humiliation suffered at the hands of Makhdum ul Mulk, created respect reverence, sympathy and faith for them, in the heart of Badauni inspite of the fact that he was not a *mehdvi*.

2.3 SHIAS

In the broad sense the term Shia is referred to the movement upholding the privileged position of the family of the Prophet (*Ahal-ul Bayt*) in the political and religious leadership of Muslim community. The word Shia had been derived from *Shi'at Ali* (partisan of Ali).¹⁰² It is not easy to say that when Shia movement had begun in India, but large number of its community, migrated to India due to the demolishing blow of Mongols on

¹⁰⁰. Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi, *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar fi Israr ul Abrar*, ed. Muhammad Abdul Ahad, Matba Mujtabai, Delhi, H. 1332 (1914 A.D.), p. 197.

¹⁰¹. Ibid., p. 283.

¹⁰². *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed., C.E. Bosworth and E. Van Donzel, et. al., New Edition, Brill Leiden, The Netherlands, 1997, p. 420.

Muslim Central Asia and Iran.¹⁰³ During the reign of Firuz Shah Tughlaq, leaders of Shia community were killed and others were threatened with punishment. Their books were also publically destroyed¹⁰⁴

In the sixteenth century, circumstances changed and Shias got important positions in the Mughal state. Humayun took refuge in the court of Shah Tehmasp during his exile was a Shia ruler of Iran. With the contingent provided by Shah Tehmasp, Humayun entered Afghanistan. Humayun appointed many Shias on important positions, in the re-conquered areas. Some of them were Bairam Khan, Ali Quli Khan-i-Zaman, and his brother Bahadur Khan.¹⁰⁵

Shia migration continued throughout Mughal period, though they were regularly suppressed by Sunni *ulema* of India. Hostility of Sunni *ulema* towards Shias was so much that, when Mir Murtaza Sharif, a Shia, died and was buried besides the tomb of Amir Khusru, Shaikh Abdun Nabi persuaded Akbar, to give order to exhume the body of Mir Murtaza because was Shia and Amir Khusru was a Sunni. It was done so, and Mir Murtaza was again buried somewhere else.¹⁰⁶ In spite of these types of unpleasant

¹⁰³. S. A. A. Rizvi, *Socio-intelelctual History of Isna Ashari Shi'is in India*, Canberra, Australia, 1986, Vol. I, p. 47.

¹⁰⁴. *Futuh-at-i-Feruzshahi*, op.cit., pp. 6-7.

¹⁰⁵. Afzal Husain "Liberty and Restraint – A Study of Shiaism in the Mughal Nobility"

PIHC, 1981, p. 276.

¹⁰⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 99.

incidents, large number of Shias migrated to the Mughal domain due to the relatively congenial atmosphere of Mughal court.¹⁰⁷

In our present discussion, the information provided by Abdul Qadir Badauni about Shias will be analyzed and explored particularly, his conflicting ideas about them

In foregoing pages we will discuss the role of some prominent Shia nobles at the court of Akbar with particular reference to Badauni's contention that they were responsible for distancing Akbar from Islam.

MULLA MUHAMMAD YAZD

In *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, about Mulla Mohammad Yazdi, Badauni writes 'soon after there, came from Persia, Mullah Muhammad Yazd, who got the name of Yazidi, and attaching himself to the emperor, commenced openly to revile to companions of Prophet... and tried hard to make him a Shia'.¹⁰⁸ Later on Mullah Muhammad Yazd issued a *fatwa* of *kufir* against Akbar soon after the *Mahzar* of 1579 on the pretext of being inimical to Islam. He was arrested and subsequently killed.¹⁰⁹ While narrating his execution, Badauni does not acknowledge the role played by him in upholding *Shariat*. The execution of Muhammad Yazd is also indicate that

¹⁰⁷. Afzal Hussain, "Liberty and Restraint – A Study of Shiaism in the Mughal Nobility", op.cit., p. 277.

¹⁰⁸. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 211.

¹⁰⁹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 276-277.

Badauni's contention that emperor was under the influence of Shias was not correct.

The other Iranian who got prominence in the court of Akbar was Hakeem Abul Fath Geelani and his brothers. According to Athar Abbas Rizvi they were Shias.¹¹⁰ But Afzal Hussain differs from his point of view and considers Abul Fath Geelani as a sunni.¹¹¹ Badauni, who was also very much critical to Abul Fath Geelani but, in the *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* had not referred him as Shia. This gives force to Afzal Hussain's argument.

FATHULLAH SHIRAZI

Fathullah Shirazi was a native of Shiraz in Persia was one of the most prominent Shia noble at Akbar's court. Badauni writes that 'Fathullah Shirazi was such a staunch Shia, and at the same time such a worldly office hunter and such a worshipper of mammon and of the nobility, that he would not give up a jot of titles of bigoted Shiaism'.¹¹² Badauni presents him as a tyrant and to prove his points narrates a story in their context. He tells that Fathullah Shirazi who was assigned the whole Basawar and its all *Madad-i-Mash* land,¹¹³ presented to the emperor an amount of one thousand rupees

¹¹⁰. S. A. A. Rizvi, *Socio-intelelctual History of Isna Ashari Shi'is in India*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 215.

¹¹¹. Afzal Hussain, "Liberty and Restraint – A Study of Shiaism in the Mughal Nobility", op.cit., p. 279.

¹¹². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 315.

¹¹³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 368.

tyrannously extracted from the widows and orphans'.¹¹⁴ It appears that Badauni intentionally introduced this episode to prove that Fath ullah was a oppressive administrator. Not only that he wanted to elevate Fathullah's brutality so much that only divine intervention could help him. He writes 'just after this event he died'.¹¹⁵ He wanted to make their impression that due to his tyranny, he was punished by God. In the following chapter we will discuss about him in more details

MULLAH AHMAD OF THITTAH

Ahmad Thattavi was another notable Shia divine at the court. His forefathers were Hanafi Sunnis.¹¹⁶ In the time of Shah Tahmasp, he visited Iran and he accepted Shia faith.¹¹⁷ Some time afterwards he also visited Mekkah.¹¹⁸ From Mekkah he came to the Deccan¹¹⁹ where he served under the Autub Shahi ruler.¹²⁰ From there he moved to north India and joined the court of Akbar in 1582.¹²¹

¹¹⁴. Ibid.

¹¹⁵. Ibid.

¹¹⁶. S. A. A. Rizvi, *Socio-Intelelctual History of Isna Ashari Shi'is in India*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 227.

¹¹⁷. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 317.

¹¹⁸. Ibid.

¹¹⁹. Ibid.

¹²⁰. *Majalis-ul Mumnin*, p. 255; also see S. A. A. Rizvi, *Socio-intelelctual History of Isna Ashari Shi'is in India*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 228.

¹²¹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 317.

Around that time, the order of writing of *Tarikh-i-Alfi* was issued by Emperor Akbar.¹²² Seven authors were deputed to complete work.¹²³ However, Mullah Ahmad of Thattah was ordered to complete the Islamic history from its thirty sixth years onwards.¹²⁴

Badauni quotes that, *Tarikh-i-Alfi* was compiled into three volumes and first two of these were prepared by Mullah Ahmad of Thattah.¹²⁵ It appears that the career of Mullah Ahmad was confined to the literary activities in the court, and in 1587 when he was in Lahore, was killed Mirza Faulad.¹²⁶ Sectarian conflict seems the reason of his murder, because Badauni is of the view that (Mullah Ahmad) was killed because he used to revile three caliphs, and it has been cause for his murder.¹²⁷

Badauni's attitude towards Mullah Ahmad was very harsh. His writing leaves an impression that he had some connection with Mullah Ahmad. Badauni writes, 'Mullah Ahmad's forefathers had been very scrupulous orthodox believers (*Sunnies*), and this wretch used to revile them. "God curses him who curses his father".¹²⁸ In another reference Badauni further indicates that his personal contact with Mulla Ahmad as he writes:

¹²². Ibid., p. 318.

¹²³. Ibid.

¹²⁴. Ibid., p. 319.

¹²⁵. Ibid., p. 392.

¹²⁶. Ibid., p. 364.

¹²⁷. Ibid.

¹²⁸. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p.317.

‘Iraqis took the opportunity of mentioning my name to him (Mullah Ahmad) in terms of praise, upon this he addressed me “I see the mark of Shiah stamped on your forehead”. I replied promptly “Just as much I see Sunni stamped on yours”. The friends who were present all laughed and were pleased.¹²⁹ In 1591-92, Abdul Qadir Badarmi was ordered to revise *Tarikh-i-Alfi*. In this connection Badauni writes, “since, the second volume contained much bigotry (*Ta’assub*) the emperor commanded me to revise it’.¹³⁰ Badauni’s harshness crossed all limits when he uses almost abusive language for the dying Mullah Ahmad of Thattah. He states ‘I saw his face looking actually like that of a pig’.¹³¹ Badauni composed a chronogram, ‘Bravo the dogger of steel’¹³² for Mirza Faulad who had killed Mullah Ahmad, highlighting it as an act of bravery, for the cause of orthodox Sunnism.¹³³

There are few other references in the *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, which observed Badauni’s hostility towards Shias. In the early pages of first volume of *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, he adores the science of *tafseer* of Quran, jurisprudence, and history as a subject, but he uses very sarcastic languages for those who differ from his type of opinion on Islamic sciences and history. He says, ‘while on the other hand an insignificant band of

¹²⁹. Ibid., p. 318.

¹³⁰. Ibid., p. 392.

¹³¹. Ibid., p. 364.

¹³². Ibid.

¹³³. Ibid., p. 365.

innovators and inventors who with the disgraceful partisanship of greed mindedness and shortsightedness as regard both outwards and inwards qualities, have placed their feet in the ally of audacity and introduced interpolations and errors into true and memorable histories'.¹³⁴ It seems to be a reference to Shias whom Badauni believed to be interpolators of 'true history'. This argument that it is a reference about Shias is affirmed when Badauni tells in preceding lines, about the traditional conflict of Shias and Sunnis, on the matter of disputes between companions of Prophet. He states 'brand of innovators...estimating the conflicts and discussions of noble companions and mighty followers of Prophet, by their own conditions, attributed them to mutual contradiction and hatred and to rivalry in the splendor and amount of their property and family'.¹³⁵ Badauni presents Shias as innovators, who are not able to understand the 'great science of history'. In many places Badauni does not leave opportunity to project Shias as a group who make innovation (*Bid'at*) into true religion. While writing the history of Sher Shah, he gives the contents of a letter of Sher Shah, which had been written to Mir Saiyid Rafiuddin Safavi, who was leaving India for the purpose of pilgrimage. He says that Sur ruler wrote 'I intend in a short time by the help of God.....passing along the seashore to fight with Qizil Bashir (Shias) who oppose the progress of Company of pilgrims to the Kabah and have added objectionable innovations to established religion

¹³⁴. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 4.

¹³⁵. Ibid.

(Islam) and have given rise to bigoted interference with orthodox followers of Muhammad'.¹³⁶ Badauni considers this desire of Sher Shah to save Sunni pilgrims as sufficient cause for salvation of Sher Shah from the fire of Hell.¹³⁷ Another example of the bitterness of Badauni is an incident of debate between two persons. One of them was Shia and another was Sunni. According to Badauni, Tahir Dakhni, a very famous scholar came from Nizam Shahi kingdom to Gujrat, where he came in contact of a Sunni Sufi and Alim, namely Khawajah Abul Barkat. They discussed various religious matters.¹³⁸ Badauni says 'suddenly the conversation turned upon the religion and sects..... the Khwajah rejoined 'curse on a faith (Shiaism) of which cursing is an element.'¹³⁹

There are some other references which indicate extreme bigotry of Badauni for Shias. Muizul Mulk, a Shia and one of the commanders of Mughal army which was sent against the Uzbek brothers, who rebelled against Mughal authority. Uzbeks sent message for negotiation but Muzul Mulk denied it. On the denial of Muizul Mulk for any peaceful negotiation, Badauni says 'Muizul Mulk showed a Pharaoh like character and harshness like Shaddad',¹⁴⁰ which is one of the impenitence of Sayyids of Mashhad¹⁴¹.

¹³⁶. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 370.

¹³⁷. Ibid.

¹³⁸. Ibid., p. 491.

¹³⁹. Ibid.

¹⁴⁰. There is a story in Quran, that Shaddad, who was *vazir* of Nemrud, ordered to construct a paradise.

Badauni uses terms like Pharaoh and Shaddad as a symbol of evil and compared them with Shias of Mashhad. Further, he uses abusive language in poetic manner. He writes ‘O men of Mashhad with the exception of Imam¹⁴² may the curse of God rest on each one of you’¹⁴³

In the court of Akbar, when some people gave proofs regarding the time of emergence of a renovator,¹⁴⁴ Shias also brought some proofs in this regard.¹⁴⁵ Badauni again showed his bitterness for Shias. He used word nonsense (*Khurafat*)¹⁴⁶ as a similar for proofs provided by Shias. According to him due to these nonsense proofs Akbar started assuming the position of Prophet.¹⁴⁷ Abul Fath Gilani, shaved his beard, an act considered to be against *sharia*. This is deplored by Badauni and he regarded it as an act of Shias and Hindus.¹⁴⁸ He also provides sectarian conflicts which taking place frequently at the court: He writes that ‘heated debates between Shias and Sunnis took place on disputed matters such as Fedak¹⁴⁹ and Siffin’¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴¹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 80.

¹⁴². According to W.H. Low it is reference of Imam Raza, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, tr. by W.H.Low, Vol. II, p. 81, f.n. 3.

¹⁴³. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., (Text) Vol. II, p. 80.

¹⁴⁴. *Ibid.*, p. 287.

¹⁴⁵. *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶. *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷. *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸. *Ibid.* p. 304.

¹⁴⁹. *Fadak* was personal property of the prophet. After his death it was not handed over to his heirs, but confiscated by state.

Badauni's comments indeed reveal his extreme bitterness against Shias; however, counter the general perception of Badauni's hostility towards Shias. Such as for Fathullah Shirazi he comes out with criticism which surprisingly specifies his admiration for him. Some Shias as an exception are also praised by him. The most prominent among them was Fathullah Shirazi about whom he writes: 'in the regions of Theology, Mathematics and physics and in all branches of sciences both logical and traditional was without equal in his age'.¹⁵¹ Further he mentions chronogram of date as 'Shah Fathullah, Imam of Saints'.¹⁵² In the third volume of his *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, when he gives date in the form of chronogram of death of Shah Fathullah Shirazi, uses very respectable words. He states 'He (Fathullah Shirazi) was an angle'.¹⁵³ Badauni had been impressed with Shah Fathullah's courage and his firm belief in Shia Islam. He quotes 'In the state hall he said with the greatest composure his Shiah prayers, a thing which no one else would have dared to do'.¹⁵⁴ Badauni's another statement creates impression that, Akbar was also impressed with his qualities. He states 'He (Akbar) thought it desirable to encourage a man of such attainments and practical knowledge'.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 308; Seffin was a battle took place between Ali and Muawia, the governor of Syria in 657 A.D.

¹⁵¹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 315.

¹⁵². Ibid., p. 316.

¹⁵³. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 155.

¹⁵⁴. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 315.

¹⁵⁵. Ibid., p. 316.

Another Shia Alam Qazi Nurullah Shustari, known as *Shahid-i-Salis* (The third Martyr), was the greatest Shia scholar in India.¹⁵⁶ Badauni admires him, and says that ‘Although he is by religion a Shia, he is distinguished for his impartiality, justice virtue, modesty, piety, continence and such qualities are possessed by noble men, and is well known for his learning, clemency, quickness, understanding, singleness of heart, clearness of perception and acumen. He is the author of several able works and he has written a monograph on the undotted commentary of Shaikh Faizi, which is beyond all praise’.¹⁵⁷

The sectarian tension depicted by Badauni does to seem so much of scale. Badauni himself writes that ‘his majesty once ordered that the Sunnis should stand separately from the Shias. The Hindustani without exception went to Sunni side and the Persian to the Shia side.’¹⁵⁸ This passage indicates that other factors of division in the court more forceful than religious sectarianism; regional groupism was more conspicuous than Shia-Sunni conflict. Among the Iranians Shias were in large number, but few Sunnis and *Tafzili* Sunnis was also Iranians. They also joined the Iranian side, despite the fact that they were not shias. *Nuqtavis*, who were also not Shias, and notwithstanding that they were persecuted by Shias in Iran, went to the Iranian side. The minor groups of Iranians who were not Shias

¹⁵⁶. S. A. A. Rizvi, *Socio-Intellectual History of Isna Ashari Shi'is in India*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 342.

¹⁵⁷. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 137.

¹⁵⁸. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 337.

notwithstanding the order of the emperor, did not come to side of Hindustani Sunnis.

Besides *Muntakhab-ul Tawarikh* several references of Shias can also be located in the *Najat-ur Rashid*. In this work depiction of Shias is in different form; he uses very civilized language in scholarly style, for the Shias. Even his praise for Ali creates impression in the mind of reader that he had some sort of *Tafzili* leanings, and some texts even exceeds to that. If he condemns some Shia practices, he does so only in a scholarly manner, with the support of proofs and logics.

Badauni says ‘we should love all four caliphs’¹⁵⁹ but he leaves it on a believer to make him preference because it is a natural instinct, but one should not express his love for any particular companion, publically.¹⁶⁰ Badauni’s attitude for both sects of Islam is somewhat sufistic. He writes, ‘debates and disputations among Shias and Sunnis are the order of the day, and leads to much acrimony. Nobody seems to have time or inclination to talk about love for God and his Prophet’.¹⁶¹

Badauni’s personal attitude towards Ali and *ahl-i-Bayt*¹⁶² is full of great reverence. ‘If Ali had revealed his real true self all the people would have fallen prostrate before him What better proof of his excellence than that

¹⁵⁹. *Najat-ur-Rashid*, op. cit., p. 121.

¹⁶⁰. Ibid.

¹⁶¹. Ibid., p. 123.

¹⁶². Ali and his family and few others, declared by Prophet

people thought he was Allah.'¹⁶³ Believing Ali, as God is a Nureri¹⁶⁴ religious ideology. So it is extreme reverence of Ali by Badauni and is a strange contradiction in the thoughts of Badauni, because he is believed to be a Sunni bigot, but his admiration for Ali in Nuseri pattern cannot be acceptable for a liberal Sunni.

It many places in *Najat-ur Rashid* there are several references of Hasan and Hasain. Badauni addressed them *Amir-ul Mumnen* (commander of faithfuls) which is a Sunni style of addressing for the successor of Prophet Muhammad. He also addresses, Ali as *Amerul Mumnen*¹⁶⁵ But for Umayyad rulers he uses term *Mulk*¹⁶⁶ (Kings), and for Munawiyah an opponent of Ali, he says only *Wali-i-Sham*¹⁶⁷ (Governor of Syria), not *Amerul Mumnen* neither *Caliph*. These ideas of Badauni are very much similar to a *Tafzili*.¹⁶⁸

There is a debate among the Sunni Ulema regarding the acts of Yazid, whether it is right or wrong. There are three opinions regarding the cursing of Yazid. An eminent Sufi Shaikh Sharfuddin *Yahya Maneri* does not give permission to a Sunni for the cursing of Yazid.¹⁶⁹ Ibn Taimiyah and Imam

¹⁶³. *Najat-ur Rashid*, Ibid., p. 411.

¹⁶⁴. *Nuseri* is a sect of *Sheas*, who believes that Ali was God.

¹⁶⁵. *Najat-ur Rashid*, op. cit., p. 160.

¹⁶⁶. Ibid., p. 159.

¹⁶⁷. Ibid., p. 482.

¹⁶⁸. Ibid., pp. 145, 197.

¹⁶⁹. A *Sunni*, who believes Ali superior to other companion of Prophet.

Ghazali advise to keep caution.¹⁷⁰ Imam Taftazani another Islamic scholar is of the view that Yazid should be cursed for the killing of Husain in the Karbala¹⁷¹ Badauni quotes the opinion of Taftazani and justifies the cursing of Yazid. He says ‘curse of God on Yazid, his helpers and his supporters’.¹⁷²

In *Najat-ur Rashid*, Badauni’s laments for the disunity among the Shafiis, Hanfis, and Shias and he narrate an incident, borrowed from *Majma-ul-Buldan* to highlight its grave consequences.¹⁷³ He writes that in a city Hanafis, Shafiis and Shias lived together peacefully. But on some pretext, Hanafi and Shafii eliminated Shias from city and after sometime Shafiis over powered Hanafis. But the power of Shafiis could not survive for a long because Halaku Khan’s mongol armies destroyed the whole city.¹⁷⁴ Badauni’s lament for this incident is for disunity among the groups of Muslims.

On some points he is critical to Shias practices particularly their utterance of ‘*Aliwaliullah*’ in *Azan* and *Kalimah* ¹⁷⁵. He also condemns the cursing of the companions of prophet. But this criticism of Shia practices is

¹⁷⁰. Also see for example Ishtiyah Ahmad Zilli, “Badauni Revisited: An Analytical Study of *Najat-ur-Rashid*”, article published in *Medieval of India, Essays in Intellectual Thoughts and culture*, ed. I. H. Siddiqui, Vol. I, p. 157.

¹⁷¹. Ishtiyah Ahmad Zilli, “Badauni Revisited: An Analytical Study of *Najat-ur-Rashid*”, op.cit., p. 157.

¹⁷². Ibid.

¹⁷³. *Najat-ur-Rashid*, op.cit., p. 155.

¹⁷⁴. A book written by Faqut Rumi, in thirteenth century

¹⁷⁵. *Najat-ur-Rashid*, Ibid., p. 369.

purely scholastic and it was accepted as a general Sunni attitude on this matter.

In the *Najat-ur Rashid*, the picture presented by Badauni is different from that of *Muntakhab-ul Tawarikh*. The main reason for this is that *Najat* is a purely religious book, and Badauni made his full attempt to maintain its religious sanctity. As *Najat-ur-Rashid* is serious work of religious nature and not a compilation of a polemical debates. The language used by Badauni is soft and persuasive unlike *Muntakhab* wherein he expresses his views without any restraints and sometimes even using abusive language. As a consequence a reader of *Najat-ur-Rashid* may notice contradiction in Badauni's perception of Shiaism from the one formed after a study of *Muntakhab*.

On the basis of historical documents it can be concluded, he was against everything which was not corroborated with his type of religion. Not only Shias, even Sunni *ulema* like Abdun Nabi Abdullah Sultanpuri, and Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi also have been stricken by Badauni with his sarcasm. It can be assumed that his *Muntakhab* was written with a critical point of view; only few could escape, from his derogatory remarks. Indeed Shias were unparticular target because in his view, they were mainly responsible for Akbar's deviation from Islam, apart from the traditional conflict between Shia and sunni ideology Therefore if any one takes him only as a foe of

Shias, one must also consider his admiration for some of the Shia intellectuals, such as Qazi Nurullah Shustari and Fathullah Shirazi.

2.4 RAUSHANIYAS

The *Raushaniya* sect was founded by Bayazid Ansari, a native of Jalandhar who was born in 1525.¹⁷⁶ His lineage traced as the descendant of Ayub Ansari who was a close companion Prophet.¹⁷⁷ He was brought up in a family where environment was not harmonious. His parents shared a strained relationship which culminated into divorce. This discomfort in his life developed loneliness in him. His solitude created philosophical traits in him.¹⁷⁸ Finally, he left home and went on wandering. During this phase of life he came across Sulaiman Ismail who was a Sufi.¹⁷⁹ When he crossed forty years of his age he heard a mysterious voice telling him to live according to the ritual practices of *Shariah* and to perform prayer like Prophet.¹⁸⁰ Hence, he began to preach his religious ideas openly. He impressed the Afghan of the *Roh* with his piety, acts of miracles and

¹⁷⁶. *Dabistan-i Mazahib*, op. cit., p.345.

¹⁷⁷. Afzal Husain, "The family of Bayazid Ansari-The founder of Raushnia Movement", ed. Irfan Habib, *IHC*, Local Volume, 1989, Aligarh, p. 413.

¹⁷⁸. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, op. cit., pp. 346-47.

¹⁷⁹. *Ibid.* p. 345.

¹⁸⁰. *Maqsd-ul-Mumenin*, Punjab University, MSS, p. 444, also see Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, *Saviors of Islamic Spirit*. op. cit., Vol. III, p.34.

revelations.¹⁸¹ A large number of Afghan tribes around Peshawar also joined Bayazid and his followers. His large number of followers came from *Mahmand* tribe. Besides them the Bluchis and Sindhis also joined him though they were least in number.¹⁸²

He also wrote several books. These are: *Sirat-ul Tauhid*, *Khair-ul Bayan*, *Maqsud-ul Munenin* and *Halnamah*.¹⁸³ He sent missionaries to propagate his ideas at different places. The number of his disciple swelled so much that North West Frontier and adjoining areas were overrun by them.¹⁸⁴ His followers addressed him as '*Miyan Roshan*' (the enlightened).¹⁸⁵

The idea of Bayazid became a source of trouble for those who were not his followers. He argued that 'anyone who does not possess knowledge of his own self and of God is not a man in true sense'. According to him 'if he is harmful he deserves the same treatment as the wolf, the tiger, the serpent or scorpion and according to the teaching of Arabian Prophet such animal should be destroyed before they inflict injury if a person virtuous and

¹⁸¹. Farid Bhakkari, *Zakhirat-ul-Khawanin*, ed. by Saiyid Moinul Haq, Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi, Pakistan, 1961, Vol. II, p. 223.

¹⁸². Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, op. cit., Vol. III. p.35.

¹⁸³. S. A. A. Rizvi, "Available works of Bayazid Roshani" *PIHC.*, Delhi, 1961, pp. 181-182

¹⁸⁴. Akhund Darviza, *Tazkir-ul Abrar wa Asharar*, pp. 305-14; also see K.A.Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, op. cit., p. 64.

¹⁸⁵. *Hal Namah*, fol.99b; see also Tariq Ahmad, *Religio-Political Ferment in the North West Frontier, During the Mughal Period-The Raushania Movement*, Delhi, 1982, p. 35.

prays regularly he is only like a cow and sheep and killing of ship and cow is lawful.’¹⁸⁶ *Dabistan-i Mazahib* informs us that he declared himself *Mehdi*.¹⁸⁷ These ideas were welcomed by the tribes of border and hilly regions of North West Frontier.

His main proposition was not very different from the well-known mystic esotericism. According to Bayazed the recitation of forth *Kalima* bearing witness to the unity of God and to speak truth were legal aspects; the spiritual aspects was to remain continuously engrossed in the mediation of God and to guard the heart from doubt. Fasting during the month of Ramzan and to keep oneself away from food and drinking as well as sexual pleasure is the law; to bent to eat little to keep away body from indulgence in evil are demands of spiritual life. To pay Zakat is a legal obligation but to give food and clothes to a poor is mysticism.¹⁸⁸

About these ideas Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi is of the view that ‘upto this point there is hardly anything original in Miyan Bayazid’s teachings. Even theologians are not impervious to these higher interpretations of law’.¹⁸⁹ But problem occurred when he expressed his views for those who were not his followers and it created source of trouble for them.

Akhund Darwiza, an Afghan scholar (a contemporary of Bayazed), in his book *Tazkirul Abrar* provides detailed information about Bayazed’s

¹⁸⁶. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, op. cit., pp.348-49.

¹⁸⁷. *Ibid.*, p.349.

¹⁸⁸. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, op. cit., p.350.

¹⁸⁹. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi “The Rushaniyah”, *PIHC*, 1952, p. 366.

ideas. According to Akhund Darwiza the philosophical teaching of Bayazed were based on his believe that ‘God is omnipresent’. All existing objects are formed of Deity.¹⁹⁰ The greatest manifestation of Divinity is *Pir*. Bayazid told his followers ‘I am your ‘*Pir*’ and your God.’¹⁹¹ The sole test of right and wrong is obedience to the *Pir*, who occupies the status of Prophet or Deity. The greatest of all sins is disobedience of his *Pir*, which is disobedience to Deity itself.¹⁹² He also states that ‘those who will not receive the percepts of *Pir* are in the situation of brutes, whom it is in some cases meritorious, and in all lawful, to kill or that of dead men whose property naturally devolves to the living, and may therefore be legally plundered at pleasure by all true believers.’¹⁹³

These principles were welcomed by the tribes of borders and hilly regions of North West frontier and Bayazid became religious.

Bayazid’s ideas were not only the opposition to Akbar’s ideas of tolerance but were a great threat for political stability of the region, which was not acceptable in any condition, to the Mughal emperor. Another extremely dangerous aspect this movement was the claim of Bayazid that he

¹⁹⁰. Akhund Darviza, *Tazkirat-ul-Abrar*, p. 305; also see for Tariq Ahmad “Akhund Darviza on the Rawshaniyyas and Akbar” ed. Irfan Habib, *PIHC*, Local Volume, Bodh Gaya, 1981, p. 2.

¹⁹¹. Tariq Ahmad “Akhund Darviza on the Rawshaniyyas and Akbar”, *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁹². *Ibid.*

¹⁹³. Tariq Ahmad, “Akhund Darviza on the Rawshaniyyas and Akbar”, *Ibid.*

was the promised *Mehdi*. No Muslim ruler of medieval time, was ready to give a place to a self-proclaimed *Mehdi*, and Akbar was one of them.

In his early career, Bayazed confined himself to the fold of piety, religion and other social activities. But as his activities developed in a political pattern then Akbar had no option but to act against Raushanias. Bayazed was also reported to have issued a proclamation asking those who have horses to deliver him. They were promised double price after the wealth of Hindustan would fall in Bayazid's hand.¹⁹⁴

For the first time Mughal Government was provoked and decided to take action when Bayazed attacked on a *carvan* which was proceeding towards Kabul. Raushanias made it a regular practice to attack *caravans* heading towards Afghanistan from India via Khyber-Pass. This route became unsafe. In these circumstances Mughal governor of Kabul dispatched a contingent to deal with Raushanias. Bayazed was arrested but released later.

He was again successful in collecting his followers and went to the district of *Tirah*, where he restarted his rebellious activities. Mughal forces under the command of Muhsin Khan fell upon *Raushanias* and dispersed

¹⁹⁴. J. Leyden, "On the Roshaniyah Sect and its Founder Bayazed Ansari", Asiatic Research, XI, 1810, p. 389: Leyden's information are based on Akund Darvizas's *Makhzan-ul Islam*, cf. Tariq Ahmad, *Raushaniyah Movement*, op.cit., p. 42.

them. Bayazed , however escaped but could not live long and died in 1572.¹⁹⁵

According to Badauni, after his death his son Jallah paid his respect to Akbar when the emperor was returning from Kabul in 1581. Badauni further states that due to his hereditary impudence Jallah fled away and became a bandit and also blocked the roads between India and Kabul. Akbar appointed Man Singh to subdue this rustic band of *Raushanias*'.¹⁹⁶

His activities reached to such height when Shahrukh Mirza came to seek asylum at the Mughal court, *Raushanias* blocked his way and he could save his life with great difficulty.¹⁹⁷ Similarly, Rajah Man Singh, who was given government of Kabul, had to take special measures to escort the ambassador sent by Abdullah Khan Uzbek to Mughal court.¹⁹⁸

In 1587-88, Abdul Muttalib who was especially deputed to punish *Raushanias* inflicted a crushing defeat on them.¹⁹⁹ After this defeat Jalalah went to the court of Abdullah Khan Uzbek to seek his help but having failed his mission resumed his struggle against Mughals. The Emperor also

¹⁹⁵. Tariq Ahmad, *Raushaniyah Movement*, op. cit., pp. 43-46.

¹⁹⁶. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 349.

¹⁹⁷. *Akbar Nama*, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 446-47.

¹⁹⁸. Ibid. p. 479; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 351.

¹⁹⁹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 357.

responded aggressively and successive military commands were appointed to shun their rebellious activities.²⁰⁰

Wahid Ali a relative of Jalalah came forward against Mughals but he was forced to submit. The member of Jalah family along with their large following also captured, but Jalah escaped.²⁰¹

Muntakhab-ut Tarikh hardly mentions anything about *Roshania*, after the surrender Wahadat Ali in 1594.²⁰² His information's about *Raushaniyas* are not unique but almost mere replication of *Akbar Nama* and *Tabqat-i-Akbari*. His personal views *Raushaniyas* they are bitter; he considers them heretic and bandits, and their religious tenets as 'pernicious to the society'.²⁰³ It is important to note that both Abul Fazl and Badauni very harshly criticize the *Raushaniyas*.

²⁰⁰. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 380-381; *Akbar Nama*, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 639.

²⁰¹. *Ibid.*, p. 388.

²⁰². *Ibid.*

²⁰³. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 3

IRANIAN INTELLECTUALS AT AKBAR'S COURT

Before Humayun's exile from India, Turani nobles were in maximum number in his nobility. But when he decided to take refuge in Iran most of the Turanis left him.¹ When Humayun returned back to India, with the help of Iranian ruler Shah Tahmasp, he had a large contingent of Iranian soldiers with him. During his stay in Iran he was joined by many Iranis, who had come to India with him. During his stay in Afghanistan (1546-55), he appointed them on many important posts like *Diwan*, *Vazir*, *Mir-i- Saman*, *Mushrif-i-Diwan* etc.²

After 1547, a considerable number of nobles of Persian origin came into prominence, because of the unreliability of old Turani nobility. These nobles had joined Kamran in the past and were ousted by fresh recruits and indeed among them Iranians

¹. Afzal Husain "Growth of Irani Elements in Akbar's Nobility", *PIHC*, Session 1975, p. 166.

². *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

were in considerable numbers.³ Position of Iranians improved considerably during Akbar's reign and many of them reached to high positions due to their service during the rebellion of Turanis, in 1567.⁴

A large number of intellectuals and poets, in this period, came to India due to the indifference of Safavid rulers for secular literature.⁵ Majority of new arrivals from Iran were Shias, but Sunnis and *Nuqtavis* too were a part of these new comers. A large number of Iranian Sunnis were *Tafzilis*.⁶ *Tafzile* Sunnis considered Ali as superior to all the companions of the Prophet.⁷ The departure of Iranis from Safavid regime had lot of social and political reasons. *Tafzilis* and *Nuqtavis* were hounded by Safavids for their religious beliefs. Among such cases, Ala-ud-daula Qazwini who came to India due to Safavid persecution was a

³. Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Political Biography of Mughal Noble: Munim Khan Khan-i-Khanan, 1497-1575, *PIHC*, New Delhi, 1973, p. XV.

⁴. Ibid., p. XVIII.

⁵. Afzal Husain "Liberty and Restraint—A Study of Shiaism in the Mughal Nobility", *PIHC*, Session 1981, p. 277.

⁶. Ibid.

⁷. S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign*, Delhi, 1975, p. 54.

Tafzili Sunni⁸ and Sharif Amuli⁹, a *Nuqtavi*, too was a victim of religious persecution. Annexation of some parts of Iran by Uzbeks created refugees who fled to India.¹⁰ The migration of Iranians to India eventually enriched the Mughal culture, and added a new dimension to it. Among the bulk of Iranis who migrated to India, a large number of them were poets, architects and physicians. These immigrants found ample opportunities and suitable positions available at the Mughal Court.

Here we are not concerned with political or diplomatic achievements of Iranians but with their intellectual accomplishments and ideological points of view and how some of them influenced cultural and religious milieu of Akbar's court.

Abdul Qadir Badauni's writings provide considerable information about them and his views would be presented with the support of other contemporary sources in this context. In the foregoing pages some of the Iranian scholars have been

⁸. Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, ed. Kabiruddin Ahmad, Ahmad Ali and Narsau Lees, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1864-69, Vol. III, p. 97.

⁹. Iskandar Beg Turkman, *Tarikh Alam Ara-i- Abbasi*, ed. Iraj Afshar, Chap Khana Gulshan, Tehran, Iran, 1337 Solar, Vol. I, p. 476.

¹⁰. Afzal Husain, "Liberty and Restraint—A Study of Shiaism in the Mughal Nobility", op. cit., p. 277.

discussed. Though a few of them will be discussed again, but it will be a different context.

3.1 PHYSICIANS

Medical science has always been a very important branch of learning and different types of medicinal systems have been developed by physicians over the ages. There were centres of learning in Iran where medical education was also imparted. A large number of physicians in the Mughal court had attained medicinal knowledge from various academies who were natives of Lahijan, Mashhad, Isfahan, Gilan, and Shiraz.¹¹

There were different reasons for the large influx of Iranis to the Mughal court. While some of them came to India in search for their livelihood, a large number of them fled to India, to avoid destruction and danger caused by internal strife in Safavid Iran.¹²

¹¹. Abdul Baqi Nahawandi, *Maasir-i-Rahimi*, ed. Hidayat Husain, Calcutta, 1931, Vol. III, pp.44, 46, 52, 754-755; Also see S. Ali Nadeem Rezavi, "Physicians as Professionals in Medieval India" in *Disease and Medicine in India: An Historical Review*, ed. Deepak Kumar, New Delhi, 2001, p. 41.

¹². Seema Alavi, *Islam and Healing: Loss and Recovery of an Indo Muslim Medical Tradition 1600-1900*, Rani Khet, 2006, p. 32.

Ain-i-Akbari and *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* provide names of physicians¹³ and a large number of them belonged to Iran. But detailed information has not been provided about them by these authors. The information regarding physicians can be traced in various scattered references in both historical accounts. But interestingly, Abdul Qadir Badauni in his *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* has given notes about fifteen physicians of the reign of Akbar,¹⁴ most of them were Iranians. He admires them for their knowledge of medicine and art of healing and some of them have been eulogized by Badauni without any adverse comments. He says ‘some of the physicians in this age were so learned in the theory and skilled in the practice of medicine that they performed the miracles like those of Isa’.¹⁵ But not every physician could escape from his criticism as he states about other physicians that ‘the healing art is a noble subject of study but a mean pursuit in the practical application, although they busied themselves in the study of medicine, sought political employment, according to

¹³. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (reprint) 2005, Vol. I, p. 188; Nizamuddin Ahmad *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Naval Kishore, Lucknow, 1875, Vol. II, pp. 395-6.

¹⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, 161-170.

¹⁵. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.161.

their several degrees.’¹⁶ The Iranian physicians discussed by Badauni were of extra ordinary caliber. Few of them will come under the forthcoming discussion.

HAKIM ALI GEELANI

Hakim Ali Geelani¹⁷ came in the service of Akbar in 1578¹⁸ and was a relative of Hakim-ul-Mulk¹⁹ and Fathullah Shirazi.²⁰ He was so learned and able in medical science that when he joined the court, Akbar ordered several bottles containing the urine of healthy and sick persons as also that of cattle and asses to be brought before the Hakim for detection. The Hakim is reported to have diagnosed each one of them correctly. After that his reputation and influence strengthened and he became close to the emperor.²¹ In 1579, he also joined a diplomatic mission to Bijapur.²² In 1581, he was also given the

¹⁶. Ibid.

¹⁷. Ibid., pp.166-167.

¹⁸. Ibid., Vol. II, p.265.

¹⁹. Ibid., p. 268; Vol. III, p.166.

²⁰. Ibid., Vol. III, p.166.

²¹. Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umara*, ed. Ashraf Ali and Abdur Rahim, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1891, Vol. I, p..569.

²². *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p.268.

Sadarat of Bihar²³ and accompanied Akbar to Kashmir in 1589.²⁴ During this visit Fathullah Shirazi, who was accompanying them, died of fever.²⁵ Before his death Fathullah was advised by Hakim Ali to take a particular medicine, which proved fruitless.²⁶ When Faizi was taking his last breath Akbar brought Hakim Ali with him to the house of Faizi, where he said to Faizi in grief, ‘O Shaikh Ji (Faizi) I have brought Hakim Ali with me, why do you say nothing’.²⁷ This shows Akbar’s great faith on Hakim Ali’s medicinal abilities.

Hakim Ali wrote various books on medicine and the practical application. Two of them were written on *Unani* medicinal system are *Sharah-i-Qanun* and *Bayad-i-Gilani*.²⁸ He was also among the authors of *Tarikh-i-Alfi*.²⁹

²³. Ibid.

²⁴. Ibid., Vol. II, p.269-70.

²⁵. Ibid., p.370.

²⁶. Ibid.

²⁷. Ibid., p.406.

²⁸. Also see for example Altaf Ahmad Azmi “Unani Medicine: Hakims and their Treaties” in *Medicine and Life Science in India*, Project of History of Indian Sciences, Philosophy and Culture, New Delhi, 2001, Vol. IV, part 2, p.344.

²⁹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p.318.

Badauni did not have very high opinion of Hakim Ali Geelani, neither for his religious beliefs nor for his abilities as physician. He says 'notwithstanding his great learning in the holy law and in Sunni theology, his malignancy in adhering to the Zaidi sect and his abstinence in the Shia heresy, in which he resembles the other physicians of the age.'³⁰ He expresses his dissatisfaction with Hakim Ali's skill as a physician when he states, 'His excellence in acquired knowledge and especially in the science of medicine is extreme, and he is passionately devoted to practice of healing art, but he is a youth, self opinionated and of limited experience. It some time happens that a patient after taking one of his draught, has a taste of draught of extinction'.³¹

HAKIM AIN-UL- MULK OF SHIRAZ

Hakim Ain-ul- Mulk was a native of Shiraz³² in Iran. A descendant of Maulana Jalaluddin Dawwani,³³ he was a renowned logician of Iran. He was also a poet and bore the title *Dawai*.³⁴

³⁰. Ibid., Vol. III, p.166.

³¹. Ibid.

³². Ibid., p.164.

³³. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. III, p.230.

³⁴. Ibid., pp.164, 230.

In 1563, when Akbar was shot by an arrow by Qutlugh Faulad, when emperor was passing through the street of Agra, riding an elephant,³⁵ Hakim Ain-ul- Mulk treated the wounds of emperor. The arrow was shot Ain-ul- Mulk was a constant companion of the emperor and participated in various diplomatic and military missions. Besides being a physician, he also played a role of useful political advisor of the empire.

Abdullah Khan Uzbek, a Turani noble of the empire rebelled, and was forced to take refuge in the principality of the Changiz Khan Gujrati. Akbar sent Ain-ul- Mulk to negotiate with Changiz Khan in the matter. Ain-ul- Mulk was successful in convincing Changiz Khan to expel Abdullah Khan from his domain.³⁶ During Akbar's campaign of Gujrat also Ain-ul- Mulk played an important active role in it.³⁷ In 1574, also he participated in the march of Akbar towards eastern province³⁸ and was sent to Bijapur in a diplomatic mission two years later.³⁹

³⁵. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, ed. Agha Ahmad Ali and Abdur Rahim, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1873-77, Vol. II, p. 205.

³⁶. Ibid., pp.229-30.

³⁷. Ibid., Vol. III, pp.7, 9-10.

³⁸. Ibid., p.87.

³⁹. Ibid., p.296; *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op. cit., Vol. II, p.250.

He was also given several important administrative responsibilities. He was posted as *Faujdar* at Sambhal, where he tactfully suppressed a rebellion.⁴⁰ He was promoted to the post of *Sadr* of Bengal, in 1581 for his good performance in Sambhal.⁴¹ In 1586, he was posted as *Bakhshi* of Agra⁴² and Handiyah a place in central India, was given him, as his Jagir.⁴³ He died in his Jagir⁴⁴ in 1595, after the illness of five months.⁴⁵ His most famous works are *Diya'al-Ayn*⁴⁶, a book on ophthalmology, and *Fawaid-ul-Insan*.⁴⁷

According to Badauni 'he is distinguished by his gracious manners and excellent qualities, and in the treatment of opthalmia his equal has not been seen'.⁴⁸ Badauni had very high opinion of his abilities. He states '(Ain-ul- Mulk) held very high

⁴⁰. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.348-49.

⁴¹. Ibid., p.372.

⁴². Ibid., p.511.

⁴³. Ibid., p.584.

⁴⁴. Ibid., p.671; *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.403 and Vol. III, p.164.

⁴⁵. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p.403.

⁴⁶. Altaf Ahmad Azmi "Unani Medicine: Hakims and their Treaties", op.cit., p.344.

⁴⁷. Ibid.

⁴⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.230.

rank among the learned, besides being a person of a most noble disposition'.⁴⁹ It was indeed, Ainul Mulk, who introduced Badauni at the court.⁵⁰ We do not find that what was the attitude of Ain-ul- Mulk for Akbar's innovations and experiments in religion?

HAKIM-UL- MULK

His name was Shamsuddin and he was a native of Gilan.⁵¹ He was also allotted other responsibilities other than his duty as physician. When Akbar was marching towards eastern province Hakim-ul- Mulk accompanied him. Once while the royal army marched ahead of Jaunpur, camp of royal ladies was left there and Hakim-ul- Mulk was appointed as in-charge of that camp.⁵² In 1572 when emperor himself proceeded for Gujrat campaign, the royal capital was placed under few trusted officers and Hakim-ul- Mulk was one of them.⁵³

⁴⁹. Ibid., p.164.

⁵⁰. Ibid., Vol. II, p.172.

⁵¹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.161.

⁵². *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp.87, 89.

⁵³. Ibid., p.43.

He was not only a physician, but was also very learned in other branches of knowledge. According to Badauni when he wrote the preface on *Nama-i-Khirad-i-Afza* and presented to the emperor, Akbar sought the advice of the Hakim ul Mulk on the quality of the preface.⁵⁴ This shows the reputation and position of Hakim ul Mulk in literary matters. He was also an active participant in the debates at the court on various issues as well. He was on the side of the orthodox section of *Ulema*, against Abul Fazl and his friends.⁵⁵ According to *Akbar Nama*, Hakim-ul-Mulk also signed the document in which Akbar was given the position of *Mujtahid*.⁵⁶

In 1580, he was sent to Mecca by the order of emperor⁵⁷ with the amount of five lacks of rupees.⁵⁸ Badauni's statement suggests that due to his disputations with Abul Fazl on religious issues and being a partisan of orthodox section of the court, he was exiled. Badauni says '...and the emperor after showing much

⁵⁴. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. III, p.161.

⁵⁵. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.263.

⁵⁶. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, 270.

⁵⁷. Ibid., p.317; *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.275.

⁵⁸. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p.285.

severity to Hakim ul Mulk on account of his opposition to Shaikh Abul Fazl, whom he called *Fuzlah* (excrement or leavings) and at last ordered him to make pilgrimage to Mekkah'.⁵⁹ Badauni's remark that 'Hakim ul Mulk being reckoned by the emperor as one those not to be trusted in the matter of religion and faith'⁶⁰ indicates Akbar's displeasure with him. According to Abul Fazl, 'he (Hakim ul Mulk) was given leave as retribution for vacillation (*Laghzish*)'.⁶¹ H. Beveridge in the translation of *Akbar Nama*, gives a note about exile of Hakimul Mulk where he says 'probably the 'vacillation' (*Laghzish*) referred to by Abul Fazl meant that first Hakim ul Mulk signed the famous document acknowledging Akbar as a pope, and that afterward he opposed'.⁶² So it may be inferred that he had to bear exile, due to his opposition to Abul Fazl or in other words, to the ideas of Akbar.

⁵⁹. Ibid., p.275.

⁶⁰. Ibid., p.285.

⁶¹. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.317.

⁶². Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, tr. by H. Beveridge, ESS Publication, Delhi Reprint, 1977, Vol.III, p.464, f.n. 1.

Badauni was his great admirer is evident when he says ‘In medicine and in the art of healing he was the Galen⁶³ (*Jalinoos*) of the age and was endowed with the healing breaths of Messeah’.⁶⁴ The main cause of admiration of Hakim ul Mulk by Badauni, was perhaps the former’s opposition to Abul Fazl and his associates whom the latter considered heretics. Badauni states ‘when the arena of strife was closed to the *ulema* and Shaikh, this physician (Hakim ul Mulk) disputed with the enemies of the faith, whenever to could find an opportunity of doing so.’⁶⁵

HAKIM ABUL FATH GILANI

He was native of Gilan and belonged to an influential family. Political disturbances in Gilan compelled him to take refuge in India and in 1575; he came to the court of Akbar along with his brothers,⁶⁶ Hakim Humam and Nooruddin.⁶⁷

⁶³. A Famous Physician and Philosopher of Greece.

⁶⁴. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.161.

⁶⁵. Ibid., p.162.

⁶⁶. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.144.

⁶⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.211.

In 1579, he was appointed *Sadr* of Bengal.⁶⁸ But just after his joining in Bengal, the *Qaqshal* rebellion broke out. *Qaqshal* rebellion uprooted Mughal authority in Bengal and some how Abul Fateh managed to escape and reached the court.⁶⁹ During the same period Qulij Khan was appointed *Vakil*, and Abul Fath with Zain Khan was ordered to assist the office of *Vakil*.⁷⁰ In 1581, he was given the charge of Delhi, Malwa, and Gujrat as *Sadr*.⁷¹ In the same year he was given the *mansab* of eight hundred and later on he was sent to Swat against Afghan rebels along with other commanders. In the battle fought against the rebels Birbal was killed, but Abul Fath with Zain Khan, fled from the battlefield. The Emperor was unhappy with this lapse that he did not allow Abul Fath with Zain Khan to present them at the court. Later on the request of Abul Fazl and Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, they were pardoned and allowed to come to the court.⁷² Hakim Abul Fath Gilani accompanied Akbar to Kashmir in 1589.

⁶⁸. *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., p.266.

⁶⁹. Ibid., pp.293, 302, 304.

⁷⁰. Ibid., 344.

⁷¹. Ibid., p.372.

⁷². *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp.483-85.

While returning back, on the way he fell ill and died at Dantur.⁷³

He was buried at a place called Hasan Abdal.⁷⁴ On his death Abul Fazl remarked, 'that adorning of Garden of acuteness, farsighted, awakened hearted and wise brain one expired'.⁷⁵

A close friend of Akbar he won his full confidence and according to Badauni 'the eldest brother (Abul Fath) whose manners and address were exceedingly winning, obtained in a short time great ascendancy over emperor and thus became in a short time, a most intimate friend of Akbar',⁷⁶. *Māasir-ul-Umara* says 'his rank was not higher than one thousand, but he was more than *Vakil*'.⁷⁷ Another testimony for his intimacy with Akbar can be judged from a letter of Abul Fazl, which he wrote to Hakim Human to console him on his brother's death. In his letter Abul Fazl expresses Akbar's deep affection and love for Abul Fath Gilani.⁷⁸

⁷³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.371.

⁷⁴. *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., p.563.

⁷⁵. Ibid., p.560.

⁷⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p.211.

⁷⁷. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, op.cit., p.559.

⁷⁸. Abul Fazl, *Maktubat-i-Allami*, tr. by Mansura Haidar, Vol. I, New Delhi, 1998, pp.52-54; this letter also contains information about death of Fathullah Shirazi.

Abdul Qadir Badauni offered few sentences of admiration for him when he remarked 'he (Abul Fath) was highly distinguished for his acumen and quickness of apprehension, and for his proficiency in all worldly accomplishments prose and poetry'.⁷⁹ But generally he was a critic of Abul Fath Gilani and held him responsible for turning Akbar from Islam and leading him to reject revelation, prophet hood, miracles of prophet and saints, and even the whole of *Shariat*.⁸⁰ Badauni's criticism for Abul Fath Geelani can be seen in various references about him and he is very harsh on him. Once Badauni was admonished by Abul Fath Geelani when he observed that Badauni's beard is shorter than the size fixed by religious law. When Abul Fath Gilani shaved his beard and head after sometime Badauni stated sarcastically 'some time after this, he himself becoming one of the Shiahs, religious mendicants, or rather a Hindu and shaving his head, became so utterly smooth faced.'⁸¹ In the recording of another event, Badauni informs that one Shaikh Arif Husain always covered himself with a veil and at the emperor's instance

⁷⁹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.167.

⁸⁰. Ibid., Vol. II, p.211.

⁸¹. Ibid., Vol. II, p.304.

both Abul Fazl and Abul Fath pulled off the veil. Shaikh threatened Hakim Abul Fath Gilani with a fearsome outcome within a fortnight. According to Badauni, Abul Fath died within fifteen days⁸² and it is here that he wants to create an impression that Abul Fath died because of the curse given by the Shaikh.

In spite of condemnation by Badauni, he was blessed with high qualities and abilities apart from being a man of literature. He was among the authors of *Tarikh-i-Alfi* and on his recommendation; Mullah Ahmad of Thattah was given the responsibility to complete the *Tarikh-i-Alfi*,⁸³ from the sixth year of Islamic history.⁸⁴

Persian physicians who joined the Akbar's court were not mere experts of medicine but they had expertise in other fields which made them integral and inseparable parts of the Mughal court. They joined the army, held *mansabs* and whenever the monarch required they rendered their services for the empire as administrators and diplomats.

⁸². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.61.

⁸³. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p.318.

⁸⁴. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p.319.

On the other hand they also possessed high literary abilities and played a great role in the development of cultural atmosphere of the court. Some of them also played their role in history writing. Hakim Humam, Fathullah Shirazi, and Abul Fath Gilani were among the authors of *Tarkh-i-Alfi*. The letters of Abul Fath Gilani are a very useful source of history for understanding Akbar's reign.⁸⁵ Some physicians were poets and bore different titles. While Hakem Saiful Mulk used the poetic name of *Shujai*⁸⁶ Hakim Ainul Mulk bore the title *Dawai*.⁸⁷ Abul Fath Gilani, Fathullah Shirazi, and Hakim-u-Mulk, all participated and gave their opinion in the philosophical and religious discussions at the court and also in the *Ibadat Khana*.

Thus one may conclude that the admission in large number of Iranian physicians in the royal services proved very beneficial for the Mughal Empire. They not only gave their useful contributions in the field of medicine, but also played important role in administration, literary activities and in the

⁸⁵. Collection of letters had been published. It was edited by Bashir Ahmad and Published by Idarah Tahqiqat Pakistan, Danishgah, Punjab, Lahore, 1967. In this collection seventy two letters written to different persons have been included.

⁸⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp.163, 251.

⁸⁷. Ibid., pp. 163, 230.

development of cultural atmosphere of the court. Most of the physicians who got prominence in the court with the exception of very few were liberal in their religious views and whenever they participated in the discussions at the court on religion and quite philosophy; they always opposed the orthodox *ulema*. This, quite naturally helped them in improving their position as they were mostly in accordance with the ideas of Abul Fazl and Akbar.

Apart from the above mentioned physicians, Badauni names certain other Iranian physicians such as Hakim Humam,⁸⁸ Hakim Muzaffar of Ardastan,⁸⁹ Hakim Fathullah of Gilan,⁹⁰ Hakim Saiful Mulk of Damawand,⁹¹ and Hakim Husain of Gilan.⁹² Fathullah Shirazi was also a physician who would be dealt separately.

3.2 POETS FROM IRAN

The court of Akbar became a safe haven for non-conformist literary persons after the consolidation of empire. A

⁸⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.168.

⁸⁹. Ibid., Vol. III, p.169.

⁹⁰. Ibid.

⁹¹. Ibid., p.162.

⁹². Ibid., p.167.

large number of poets also entered in the service of Mughal court and both Badauni⁹³ and Abul Fazl provide the name of those poets.⁹⁴ Abul Fazl says, ‘thousands of poets had been in the court and many of them had completed a Diwan or had written a *masnavi*.’⁹⁵

Most of the poets of Akbar’s court were free thinkers and as discussed above a large number of them came to India and joined Mughal court due to persecution in their homeland for their religious beliefs.⁹⁶ Some of them also came in search of better fortunes. Large number of poets of Iran came from the cultural centres of Iran like Mashhad, Isfahan, Hamdan, Mazandaran and Nishapur.

Abdul Qadir Badauni’s views about them were generally critical and were often accused by Badauni for their heterodox

⁹³. Ibid., pp.171-388; He gives the accounts of 168 poets.

⁹⁴. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. I, pp.189-208; Name of Fifty Nine Poets have been mentioned by Abul Fazl.

⁹⁵. Ibid., Vol. I, p.189.

⁹⁶. K. A. Nizami, “Persian Literature Under Akbar”, *Medieval India Quarterly*, 1957, Vol. II, p.310.

ideas. These poets are Ghazals Mashadi,⁹⁷ Qasim Kahi,⁹⁸ Jafar Beg,⁹⁹ Tashbihi Kashani,¹⁰⁰ Sani Khan,¹⁰¹ and Waqui Nishapuri.¹⁰²

A few of them belonged to the *Nuqtavi* sect.

GHAZALI MASHHADI

He was first poet laureate of Akbar and was man of unorthodox views. Badauni remarks ‘disgusted with heresy and irreligiousness, the people of Iraq made an attempt on his life, but he some how escaped to India’.¹⁰³ From Iran Ghazali came to India and joined the service of Ali Quli Khan Khan-i-Zaman, a senior at the Mughal court. Afterwards, he was introduced at the court and received the title of *Malik-ush-Sha‘ara*¹⁰⁴ (king of poets). *Ain-i-Akbari* had cited many specimens of his verses. One such verse quoted as follows: “If the heart, whilst in the ka‘ba

⁹⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.170; *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. I, p.196.

⁹⁸. Ibid., Vol. III, p.173; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Ibid., Vol. I, p.195.

⁹⁹. Ibid., Vol. III, p.188; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Ibid., Vol. I, p.197.

¹⁰⁰. Ibid., Vol. III, p.204; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Ibid., Vol. I, p.204.

¹⁰¹. Ibid., Vol. III, p.206.

¹⁰². Ibid., Vol. III, p.378; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Ibid., Vol. I, p.202.

¹⁰³. Ibid., Vol. III, p.170.

¹⁰⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.170.

wanders after some thing else. They worship is wicked and the ka'ba is lowered to a cloister".¹⁰⁵ Badauni had also cited his verses in the work. One of the popular couplets of Ghazali quoted by Badauni is as under:

“If the heart is fixed on God even though
in wine shop drink wine fearlessly”¹⁰⁶

These couplets are expressions of his unorthodox views and as expected Badauni have very few words of admiration for him. However, he notes that ‘his poems as regards both quality and quantity are superior to those of any of the contemporaries’¹⁰⁷ Ghazali died in 1572 in Ahmadabad.¹⁰⁸

QASIM KAH

Qasim Kahi was yet another important poet of Akbar's court. He was known for his unorthodox ideas and mingled with all sorts for people like Qalandars, Mystics and free thinkers. He used to visit different religious including famous temple of

¹⁰⁵. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. I, p.196.

¹⁰⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p.171.

¹⁰⁷. Ibid., p.170.

¹⁰⁸. Ibid.

Somnath.¹⁰⁹ According to Badauni ‘he spent his whole life in heresy and impiety’.¹¹⁰ It seems that he was also among the member of *Din-i-Ilahi*, because Abul Fazl’ informs that ‘he counted himself, among his (Abul Fazl) disciple’¹¹¹ Badauni quotes verses of his poetry, which is in non-conformist pattern.

In one of the verses Kahi writes:

“Since I journeyed along the road of the holy law
My path has been divided from that of
Muhammad the prophet”.¹¹²

In another place, Qasim Kahi says,

“O preacher! You have (nothing except) few tales
of hell.

Don’t give more torture to people on this”¹¹³

Badauni deplores him for his free thinking and irreligiousness. Though, he appreciates his abilities in various fields. He says ‘he (Qasim Kahi) was well versed in astronomy, rhetoric and mysticism of the Sufis and wrote treatise on music.

¹⁰⁹. *Diwan-i-Qasim Kahi*, ed. Hadi Hasan, p.ii; Also see K. A. Nizami, “Persian Literature Under Akbar”, op.cit., p.310.

¹¹⁰. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.173.

¹¹¹. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. I, p.195.

¹¹². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p.174.

¹¹³. *Diwan-i-Qasim Kahi*, Ibid., p.ii; see also K. A. Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, Delhi, 1989, p.311.

In short, he had no equal in his time in knowledge of mysticism of the Sufis, the art composing enigmas, history, elocution, and various other arts'.¹¹⁴

JAFAR BEG

Another distinguished poet of Akbar's court¹¹⁵, was Jafar Beg.¹¹⁶ His father was a *Vazir* of Kashan a place in Iran, in the reign of Shah Tahmasp. He came to India in 1577 and was appointed as one of the Bakshis. Later on he was given the rank two thousands and many other posts too were given to him. Once he was appointed commander of the army, and sent against *Raushanias*.¹¹⁷

Not withstanding the fact that he was very close to Akbar's religious ideas, Badauni appreciates him. He states 'his poetic genius is greater than that all of his contemporaries.... had

¹¹⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.173.

¹¹⁵. Ibid., p.216; *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. I, p.197.

¹¹⁶. *Ain-i-Akbari*, Ibid., p.197.

¹¹⁷. Blochmann's note on Jafar Beg, *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. by Blochmann, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1927, p.451-453.

he been man of one occupation, he would have enchanted the heart of many poor people'.¹¹⁸

Tashbihi of Kashan¹¹⁹ was a *Nuqtavi*. According to Badauni 'he returned to India, and attempted to seduce men to hersy and invite them to join the sect of Basakhawanis¹²⁰ other *Nuqtavi* poets discussed by Badauni are Waqui of Nishapur¹²¹ and Sani Khan of Herat.¹²²

URFI SHIRAZI¹²³

His name was Khawajah Saiyyidi and his father was a *Daroghah* of Shiraz. When he came to India, he joined the service of Abul Fath Gilani and after the latter's death in 1589, he joined the service of Khan-i-Khanan, who introduced him in the court. He died at a very early age of thirty six.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p.216.

¹¹⁹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.204; *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. I, p.204.

¹²⁰. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., pp.204-205.

¹²¹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p.378; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Ibid., p.202.

¹²². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., pp.204-205.

¹²³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p.285; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Ibid., p.196.

¹²⁴. Also see for example Shibli Numani, *Sher-ul Ajam*, Ma'arif, Azam Garh, H. 1325, Vol.III, pp.73-82.

Abul Fazl and Badauni both lamented Urfi for his pride and vanity.¹²⁵ Even his friends and admirers were also upset with his pride and sarcasm in his language.¹²⁶ It appears that his sarcastic attitude became the reason for his strained relations with Faizi and Abul Fazl. Abul Fazl mentions that when he was writing preface on the dot less commentary of Quran by Faizi, Urfi came to meet him. Abul Fazl said to Urfi that he is writing preface on the dotless commentary of Faizi, and in the preface he was not using alphabets of dots. And that his father's name has to be mentioned in it, but one of the alphabets in the name Mubarak was with dot. Urfi replied 'use dotless word Mumarak, instead of Mubarak'.¹²⁷ The meaning of Mumarak is 'an indecent one'.

Badauni cites another event about Urfi's sarcastic language. According to Badauni, once Urfi went to the house of Faizi and found him foundling with a dog. Urfi asked 'what is the name of this child of my lord's'? Faizi replied "his name is well

¹²⁵. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p. 285; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Ibid., p.196.

¹²⁶. *Sher-ul Ajam*, Ibid., p.82.

¹²⁷. *Sher-ul Ajam*, op.cit., p.83.

known (Ba ism Urfi)". Urfi replied at once "May it be auspicious (Mubarak bashad)".¹²⁸

Urfi was also very much popular among the masses. According to Badauni, 'there is no market or street, in which the book sellers do not stand at road side, selling copies of *diwans* of these two poets (Urfi and Sanāi).¹²⁹

His ideas appear similar to other non-conformist poets. Urfi says:

"Infidelity and religion both for their sake
make the fight among the people"¹³⁰

This expression of Urfi in form of poetry, seems like modern days secularism but one should keep in mind that we are talking about the medieval period, where the term 'secular' could not be applied as it is taken in modern perspective. Therefore, it was a strange expression in those days, and was based on nonconformist ideas.

But it seems that he was not irreligious, despite that his poetry reveals free thinking. At another place he says:

¹²⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.285.

¹²⁹. Ibid.

¹³⁰. *Sher-ul Ajam*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.114.

“Abstain from the company of every one
 who is not follower of Shariat.
 And repent from all,
 That is not permitted in Quran”.¹³¹

This poetry gives the impression that Urfi is repenting from bad company of sinners, and was not as comparatively irreligious as were his contemporaries.

Taqiuddin Shustar was another important poet of Akbar's court.¹³² Like his many other contemporaries he was also close follower of Akbar's religion ideology.¹³³

Besides the above-mentioned poets, a large number of other poets and their works have also been discussed by Abul Fazl, Badauni, Nizamuddin Ahmad and Ala-ud-daula Qazwini in their works.¹³⁴ Badauni for his account of poets had mainly used from *Nafais-ul-Māasir* of Ala-ud-daula Qazwini.¹³⁵

¹³¹. *Qasida-i-Urfi*, Naval Kishore, 1872, p.99; Also see K. A. Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, op.cit., p.284.

¹³². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.206.

¹³³. *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. by Blochmann, op.cit., p.218-219.

¹³⁴. Author of *Nafais-ul- Maasir*.

¹³⁵. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p.170.

The Iranian poets played a great role in the development of cultural and intellectual milieu of Akbar's court. They had suffered the high handedness of Ulema in Iran, for their thoughts and in Akbar's court they got freedom to express their heterodox ideas. They propounded ideas, which hurt the religious traditions of the time. Many a times they criticized the formal religious practices, in their poems. Akbar's curious spirit was searching the answers for his questions and the contradictions in interpretations of *ulema* further confused him. He found a solace in the ideas of these free thinking intellectual, and he was inclined towards those thoughts which were generally expressed in rhymes, by those heterodox, non conformists and freethinking poets.

3.3 SHAH FATHULLAH SHIRAZI: AN INTELLECTUAL

Akbar's court accommodated various types of Iranian intellectuals. Not only poets, physicians, architects, painters but also scientist and religious scholars other than the usual Sunni scholars have become part of Mughal court. The most prominent

among them were Qazi Nurullah Shustari, Shah Fathullah Shirazi, Sharif Amuli, and Alauddaula Qazwini.¹³⁶

In the foregoing pages we will discuss mainly the achievement of Shah Fathullah Shirazi.

Shah Fathullah Shirazi had been in the service of Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur and on Akbar's invitation; he came to the Mughal court, in 1583.¹³⁷ The high reputation of Fathullah can be understood by the fact that senior nobles, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan and Abul Fath Gilani who were also close associate of the Emperor were deputed to receive him. He was appointed as the *Sadr*.¹³⁸ Although after downfall of Abd-un-Nabi the post of *Sadr* had remained only ornamental, and therefore, the appointment of Fathullah on that post did not keep him on a high pedestal of power like Abd-un-Nabi but indeed the prestige and honour of the post of *Sadr* would have been transferred to Shah Fathullah.

¹³⁶. Alauddaula Qazwini was a Tafzili Sunni, came to India caused by religious persecution, inflicted by Safavid rulers; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp.97-98.

¹³⁷. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.401; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.315.

¹³⁸. *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., p.401.

He was also appointed as a joint Vazir with Rajah Todarmal and emperor had order Rajah Todar Mal to conduct the revenue administration with the counsels of Shah Fathullah.¹³⁹ In 1585 he received the title of *Azd-u-daulah* and was sent to Khandesh in a diplomatic mission. But his mission did not prove successful and he had to leave Khandesh.¹⁴⁰ In 1587, he arrived from Gujarat to the royal capital and resumed his duties as *Sadr*.¹⁴¹ In 1588 Basawar, where Badauni had his *Madad-i-Mash* land, was transferred to Shah Fathullah as his *Jagir*.¹⁴² In 1589 Fathullah accompanied Akbar, in his journey to Kashmir where near Srinagar he fell ill seriously and died. His body was buried on top of the Sulaiman Mountain.¹⁴³ His death was an irreparable loss to the emperor and he used to say, ‘Mir (Fathullah) was his

¹³⁹. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.457; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.343.

¹⁴⁰. *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., pp.465, 489.

¹⁴¹. Ibid., p.517.

¹⁴². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p.368.

¹⁴³. *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., p. 558; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.369 and Vol. III, p.155.

Vakil, philosopher, Physician, and astronomer, and that no one can understand the amount of his grief for him.’¹⁴⁴

The circumstances described by Badauni, of the death of Fathullah Shirazi to different places, have discrepancies. At one place Badauni states ‘he (Fathullah Shirazi) developed a burning fever in Kashmir and since he himself was a skilled physician, he treated himself by eating thick pottage, and however much Hakim Ali Gilani, forbade he would not be prevented. So the executioner of death seized him from collar and dragged him from eternal world’. According to this statement Hakim Ali tried to prevent Shah Fathullah to take thick pottage, but in another statement of Badauni, blames Hakim Ali that he prescribed thick pottage which caused death of Mir Fathullah Shirazi.¹⁴⁵ Two different statements on the same matter by Badauni might be the cause of his old age memory.

Fathullah Shirazi, beside his administrative responsibilities played his role as a scientist too. He was busy in preparing mechanical devices, and compiling mathematical calculations. He was an authority on Avicenna’s work and was

¹⁴⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.369.

¹⁴⁵. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p.167.

unique in mathematics, astronomy and engineering.¹⁴⁶ According to Abul Fazl 'If the old book of wisdom had disappeared, he (Fathullah) could have laid down a new foundation of knowledge and would not have wished for what had gone'.¹⁴⁷ Fathullah Shirazi had great sense of science and technology and invented various instruments and devices. Badauni while describing the celebrations on the twenty eighth reign year of Akbar, observes, 'according to the old custom stalls in fancy Bazar were distributed to different Amirs.... Shah Fathullah in his stall exhibits all sorts of skill such as dragging about of weight and other strange contrivances.'¹⁴⁸ *Maāsirul Umara* informs about a few inventions of Fathullah Shirazi. According to *Maāsirul Umara* 'he (Fathullah) made a mill, which worked of it self and ground flour, and mirror which showed strange figures and wheel which cleaned twelve gun barrels at once'.¹⁴⁹ A modern monograph on Fathullah Shirazi, claims that gun of twelve

¹⁴⁶. S. A. A. Rizvi, *Socio-intellectual History of Isna Ashari Shi'is in India*, Canberra, Australia, 1986, Vol. I, pp.222-223.

¹⁴⁷. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.401.

¹⁴⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.321.

¹⁴⁹. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, op.cit., p.104.

barrels was an invention of Fathullah Shirazi. These authors say that it was intentionally skipped by Abul Fazl in his writings.¹⁵⁰

Another skill of Fathullah Shirazi was his writing ability. According to Badauni 'he had some excellent works in his credit'.¹⁵¹ He was among the authors of *Tarikh-i-Alfi*.¹⁵² He attributes the preparation of an astronomical table to Fathullah Shirazi.¹⁵³ He does not mention the name of that table. But *Ain-i-Akbari* informs about translation of a part of astronomical table of Ulugh Baig,¹⁵⁴ namely *Zij-i-Jadid-i-Mirzai*,¹⁵⁵ which seems same table mentioned by Badauni. When Akbar appointed him to counsel Todar Mal,¹⁵⁶ he made number of reforms in currency and revenue.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁰. Alvi and Rehman, *Fathullah Shirazi – A Sixteenth Century Indian Scientist*, New Delhi, Appendix No. V, pp.30-31.

¹⁵¹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.155.

¹⁵². Ibid., Vol. II, p.318.

¹⁵³. Ibid., Vol. III, p.155.

¹⁵⁴. Ulugh Baig was a ruler of Central Asia, of Timurid Family. He was a good scholar of astronomy.

¹⁵⁵. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. I, p.82.

¹⁵⁶. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.457.

¹⁵⁷. Ibid., Vol. III, pp.457-459; Abul Fazl gives the details of reforms.

When the debates between court *Ulema* and Abul Fazl along with his allies took place, Shah Fathullah sided with Abul Fazl. Badauni's writing leaves the impression that to some extent Fathullah Shirazi played his role to subdue orthodox Ulema. According to Badauni Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi who was an orthodox Alim was expelled from the court due to his disputes with Abul Fazl and Fathullah Shirazi.¹⁵⁸

But there is a strange contradiction in the thoughts and deeds of Fathullah Shirazi. He appears as a traditional Shia Muslim, who believed in the basics of Islam from Badauni's writings. Badauni states 'even in the Stale Hall (*Diwan Khan-i-Khas*) he said with the greatest composure of Shiah prayers, a thing which no one else would have dared to do. Emperor therefore put him among the class of blend imitators (*Ahl-i-Taqlid*).¹⁵⁹ Information from Badauni divulges his faith in traditional religion. According to Badauni Akbar rejected the belief of bodily ascension of the Prophet to *miraj*. He says 'I (Akbar) really wonder how anyone in his senses can believe that a man whose body has a certain weight could in the space of a

¹⁵⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p.278.

¹⁵⁹. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p.315.

moment, leave his bed, go up to heaven, there have ninety thousands conversation with God, and yet on his return find his bed still warm.... what is the silly stories men will believe', ... 'and that wretch Birbal and some other wretchessaid "yes your majesty is right"But Shah Fathullah to whom, emperor wanted to listen some thing did not utter a syllable, though he was all ear'.¹⁶⁰ It appears from above statement of Badauni that Shah Fathullah had faith in well known traditional aspects of Islam. So, why did not he in spite of his belief in traditional religion, favored orthodox section of Ulema, why did he join the group of Abul Fazl. An answer of this question might be that when he joined the court, the strength of Ulema had left and, the stalwarts, Abdullah Sultanpur and Abdun Nabi had been expelled from India. Therefore orthodox group of the court had become nominal. Another important aspect of his indifference with Ulema was that in Iran he had been student of a Zoroastrian philosopher, Azar Kaiwan,¹⁶¹ who was a pioneer, of *Ishraqi* philosophical school, founded by Shahabuddin Suharwardi

¹⁶⁰. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp.316-317.

¹⁶¹. Alvi and Rehman, *Fathullah Shirazi*, op.cit., p.2; For more detail about Azar Kaiwan, see also *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, tr. by Shea and Trayer, Lahore, Pakistan, 1973, pp.51-77.

Yahya Maqtul.¹⁶² Therefore Shah Fathullah's indifference with *Ulema*, should be understood in the context of his training under *Ishraqi* influence and consequently his ideology had developed in accordance with logics and reasoning. He was closer with philosophers and thinkers, than *Ulema*, Nevertheless he had inclination for religion, but traditional *Ulema* of the court nothing had to provide him.

Fathullah's wisdom and intellect earned Akbar's favour for him and they became close friend as well. On his death, Akbar said 'he (Fathullah) had fallen into the hands of franks and had they demanded all my treasurers in exchange for him, I should gladly have entered upon such a profitable traffic, and have brought that precious jewel cheap'.¹⁶³

¹⁶². Shahabuddin Yahya Suharwardi was born in 1154. He was a Persian innovative philosopher scientist, and founder of a philosophical school, namely, *Hikmat-ul-Ishraq*. For detail see, *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. by C.E. Bosworth, Vandonzel et. al., Leiden, Vol. IV, 1978, pp.120-121 and Vol. IX, 1997, pp.782-784.

¹⁶³. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p.558.

CHAPTER 4

NATIVE ULEMA AND INTELLECTUALS AT AKBAR'S COURT

In the early days of Islam, there was no such group which could have counted as *ulema* (a group of learned people). There were several companions of prophet, who were having more knowledge in comparison to the rest of the people. But that group of companions can't be categorized as *ulema*. The *ulema* as a group emerged later. They were very different in various aspects from the companions of Prophet. Unlike the companion of prophet, *ulema* (later emerged group), received education from different seminaries in the set pattern and curriculum.

A large number of *ulema* dedicated their whole life for the cause of Islam. Many of them turned towards *Sufism*. By and large *ulema* paid their full attention towards the development of various Islamic sciences such as *fiq*, *Ilmul- kalam* and the collection of *Hadis* and they kept themselves away from the state and politics. However some among them of joined state service and became the part of royal entourage.

During the early years of Mughal rule in India, *ulema* enjoyed important position at the court and they continued to maintain their position after the accession of Akbar also. But gradually the situation changed and in due course

of time they lost the position that they enjoyed from the time of Turkish rule in India. The circumstances which led their downfall may be noticed in the emergence of Iranian intellectuals in India and their philosophical ideas, secondly, rise of Abul Fazl and finally the arrogance and haughtiness of the *ulemas* themselves.

In this chapter we will examine the circumstances that led to decline of the position of *ulema* at Akbar's court.

In this context we would examine the career and achievements of the two important *ulema* of the court, Makhdum-u-Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri and Shaikh Abdun Nabi. It would be very difficult for us to deal with Abdullah Sultanpuri and Shaikh Abdun Nabi separately. This is because of several historical incidents took place in the life of both *ulema* which were related to them. So, we will discuss their court life under single title.

4.1 SHAIKH ABDUN NABI AND MAKHDUM-UL-MULK ABDULLAH SULTANPURI

Shaikh Abdun Nabi was the son of a respected *alim* and sufi Abdul Quddus of Gangoh.¹ He studied several Islamic Sciences and traditions of prophet at Makkah and Madinah.² He was also a disciple of Chishti Sufi order.³

¹. Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maasir-ul-Umara*, ed. Abdur Rahim and Ashraf Ali, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1890, Vol. II, p. 560; Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, ed.

In 1565, emperor, Akbar invited him from Karnal and appointed as chief *sadr*.⁴ According to *Ma'asir-ul Umra*, 'in this course of time the chief transactions of state were carried out in accordance with his recommendations, his intimacy with the king became so great that the Akbar used to go to his house to hear the traditions. Akbar at the instance of Abdun Nabi showed great zeal...even he personally recited Azan...and sweep the mosque in order to acquire the merit.'⁵

Badauni informs us, 'for some time, he had so great faith in him as a religious leader that he would bring his shoes and places them before his feet.'⁶

Another significant *alim* of that time was Makhdumul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri. He was son of Shaikh Shamsuddin of Sultanpur.⁷ He acquired knowledge of various Islamic sciences.⁸ He also authored two books; (i) *Ismat-i-Ambiya* (ii) *Sharah-i-Shama-ili-n-Nabi*.⁹ Humayun gave him the title of

Ahmad Ali, Kabiruddin Ahmad and L. W. Nassau Lees, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1864-69, Vol. III, p.79.

². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. III, p.80.

³. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 561.

⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p.71.

⁵. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Ibid., Vol. II, p.561.

⁶. *Muntakhab-ul Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. III, p. 81.

⁷. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 252.

⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 70.

⁹. Ibid.

Makhdumul Mulk and *Shaikhul Islam*.¹⁰ During the reign of *Sur* rulers also he engaged important position. According to *Ma'asirul umra* some one said to Islam Shah Sur that 'he (Makhdumul Mulk) was like son to Babur, and this one should not keep in the court.' Islam Shah replied, 'I cannot find better than him.'¹¹

In the reign of Islam Shah he played very important role in the suppression of *Mehdvi*.¹² Abdullah Niyazi, a *mehdvi* adherent was severely punished by the order of Islam Shah at the instance of Makhdumul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri.¹³ Shaikh Alai who had accepted *mehdvism* under the influence of Abdullah Niyazi was summoned to court and on the instigation of Makhdumul Mulk, Islam Shah Sur ordered to torture Shaikh Alai in which he died.¹³

After accession of Akbar, Abdullah Sultanpuri was assigned the *pargana* of Tangwala with revenue of a hundred thousand rupees per anum.¹⁴ It is story of two most important *ulema* of Akbar's court. They were very able in religious knowledge, powerful and respectable in royal circle and even they were kept in

¹⁰. Ibid.

¹¹. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Ibid., Vol. III, p. 253.

¹². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 403-4.

¹³. Ibid., pp. 405-6 and 408-9.

¹⁴. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Ibid., Vol. III, p. 255.

the high pedestal by the emperor. But their position did not remain same throughout and they fell in disgrace later.

4.2 ABDUN NABI AND ABDULLAH SULTANPURI IN THE COURT

Abdun Nabi was an unyielding and insensitive theologian of the court of Akbar. After his entry in the court he influenced the emperor in such a manner that he (emperor) used to place the shoes of *sadr* in his feet. But the respect he earned from the emperor could not digest. One day, Akbar visited the assembly of Abdun Nabi, the *sadr* who used to give lectures on *Hadis* on every Friday. The emperor adorns saffron was sprinkled. The *sadr* considered it to be against *Shariat* and got so agitated that he not only scolded him but even threw his staff to hit him. Akbar controlled his anger and returned back to the palace in grief. Ho told whole story to his mother in the palace. His mother consoled him and said, people would remember that a Shaikh behaved badly and the monarch was so good that he had tolerated this behavior so patiently.¹⁵ Though Akbar outwardly accepted his mother's solace but he could never forget that the horrifying and it left scar on heart.

Badauni gives graphic account of his arrogance and the corruption which prevailed in his office:

“(*madad-i-mash* holder) had to bribe to Sayyed Abdur Rasul, the headman of the Shaikh or make presents to his

¹⁵. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 561.

Chamberlains, door keepers and sweepers, in order to get their blanket out of the mire....many of the *Aimahs* without abstaining their object died....Even in the audience hall when after mid day prayers he sat down on his throne of pride, and washed his hands and feet, he took care to spirit the water which he had used on face and garments of great *amirs* and courtiers of high degree.”¹⁶

In 1577, there occurred an incident which hastened the downfall of Shaikh Abdun Nabi. Abdus Samad the *Qazi* of Mathura collected material for the construction of a mosque. A Brahmin forcibly took it away the material and utilized it in the construction of a temple and when the *Qazi* protested the Brahman used very offensive language against Prophet Mohammad to Abdun Nabi, the *Sadr us Sudur*, who immediately summoned Brahmin to court. But the Brahmin defied the order. The emperor deputed Abul Fazal and Birbal to make an enquiry of the incident. The officers after the enquiry testified that charges against the Brahmin were correct. Now the Brahmin was arrested. Abdun Nabi wanted to take action against the Brahmin in the form of capital punishment. But there were some persons having opinion against the capital punishment based on the Hanafi jurisprudence, where it is stated that a non Muslim residing in a Islamic state can not be killed as punishment on reviling the prophet.

¹⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 205.

Shaikh Abdun Nabi wanted the punishment for the Brahmin in the form of capital punishment. He sought the permission of emperor in this regard but Akbar did not make clear the course of the whole issue. Later on, Abdun Nabi reminded Akbar once again and that time he replied that you know the religious matter better than any one. Then, Abdun Nabi issued the order of Brahmin's execution. At the time of the execution Akbar was not present in Fatehpur Sikri,¹⁷ when he came back from Bansawala¹⁸ he was surprised to know the execution of Brahman. He was not happy with the act of Abdun Nabi because he did not give permission clearly and he expressed his annoyance openly.¹⁹

According to Badauni, Hindu courtiers and ladies of harem protested to Akbar that *mullas* should not be given the power to disobey emperor.²⁰ Some Muslim scholars of the court also joined that debate and argued that Shaikh was himself a Hanfi. This school of jurisprudence does not allow the killing. According to them, Shaikh did not abide by the rule and had acted at his personal wish.²¹

There was a meeting held at Anup Talao to discuss the authenticity of the execution. Badauni noted that there were maximum people present over

¹⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 248.

¹⁸. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 81 and Vol. II, p. 242.

¹⁹. Ibid., Vol. III, pp.80-2.

²⁰. Ibid., p. 81.

²¹. Ibid.

there did not support the act of Abdun Nabi. Though Badauni himself supported the act of Abdun Nabi but the argument of Badauni made Akbar angry.²² Badauni also noted the development those followed the incident brought misfortune to Abdun Nabi. Consequently, his position began to decline thereafter.

The execution of Brahmin finally proved to be the main cause of the downfall of Abdun Nabi. Even before this incident, Akbar was not happy with Shaikh for various reasons, for instance, he was extremely unhappy with his opinion about his marriages²³. The discussion regarding this had taken place few months before the execution of Brahmin.

Akbar in his youth had married more than four in number but when he came to know about the restriction of *Shariat* he sought the opinion of *ulema* regarding its remedy according to the rule of the *Shariah*. He also informed the *ulema* that Abdun Nabi had to maintaining nine wives at the same time. The *ulema* disagreed with Shaikh Abdun Nabi²⁴. At that time Abdun Nabi was not present at the court. Therefore he was immediately summoned by the emperor questioned on the issue.

Badauni narrates in the *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* quoted the reply of Shaikh as follows:

²². *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 82.

²³. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 207-09.

²⁴. *Ibid.*, pp. 207-08.

“Abdun Nabi replied that he had merely wished to point out to the emperor that a difference of opinion existed among that Lawyers but he had not given a *fatwa*, in order to legalize irregular marriage proceedings. This annoyed his majesty (Akbar) very much....he never forget it.”²⁵

Makhdumul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri was also an arrogant and haughty person like Shaikh Abdun Nabi. His first meeting with Badauni turned into a heated debate on the some religious matter.²⁶ At the end of their meeting when debate was over, Abul Fazl, who was accompanying him acknowledged his response in such words, ‘you have passed through a great danger but he did not set himself to prosecute you. Had he done so who could have saved you?’²⁷ This statement of Abul Fazl, clearly indicate that Abdullah Sultanpuri enjoyed tremendous influence at the imperial court. But because of his arrogance, he also had a number of enemies. He was accused of no payment of *Zakat* through dubious means. It was alleged that he used to transfer his wealth to his wife at the end of the year and then the wife would transfer the amount to Abdullah Sultanpuri in the manner. Through this track he successfully avoided payment of *Zakat*.²⁸

²⁵. Ibid., p. 208.

²⁶. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 71-2.

²⁷. Ibid., p. 72.

²⁸. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 203.

It was also reported by Khan-i Jahan that Makhdumul Mulk gave a *fatwa* that pilgrimage of Makka was not necessary because the land route was under the control of hostile *Qizilbashis* and the control of sea route was under the Portuguese who issued the passes, which contained the pictures of Jesus and Marry and travel by these passes was something like idolatry.²⁹

Besides that the strong differences between Abdullah Sultanpuri and Abdun Nabi further proved the way of their undoing. Badauni quotes an incident of their infighting:

“ Makhdumul Mulk wrote a treatise, to the effect that Shaikh Abdun Nabi had unjustly killed Khizr Khan Serwani.... and saying that it was not right to repeat that prayers after him, because he was not dutiful towards his father and was affected with piles, Shaikh Abdun Nabi replied to him that he was fool and heretic.”³⁰

The difference of opinion among *Ulema* on important issues created great confusion in Akbar's mind. Badauni in this connection writes:

“emperor...was used to the company of infidels and base persons into perplexity, till doubt heaped upon doubt and he lost all definite aim, and straight wall of clear law and of firm religion was broken down.”³¹ Almost same picture we can observe from the letter of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi in which he accused the *ulema* for their nasty differences and made

²⁹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 203.

³⁰. Ibid., p. 255.

³¹. Ibid.

responsible those differences for the apathy of emperor from Islam. Sirhindi states, “in the past decades differences among the *ulema* threw the world into affliction.”³² In his another letter written to Sadr-i Jahan, he states you are aware that in the past age whatever trouble had appeared had been created on account of misfortune of the *ulema*.³³

4.3 ROLE OF SHAIKH MUBARAK AND ABUL FAZL

As already discussed the incident of the execution of the Brahmin greatly annoyed Akbar. About the same time Shaikh Mubarak came to Fatehpur from Agra and he gave his opinion authoritatively on that issue. According to Badauni, he said to Akbar, “your majesty is the *Imam* and *Mujtahid* of the age what need you have to say your words of these *ulema* for assistance in issuing your commands whether religious or secular. They have no part in true knowledge.”³⁴ And to make the position of the Emperor higher than that of the *ulema* he prepared a draft and put the signature of leading *ulema* of the empire.

³⁵ We will discuss this issue in some detail at the end of this section.

³². Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, *Maktubat-i Imam Rabbani*, Urdu tr. by Said Ahmad, Deoband, 1988, Letter No. 53.

³³. *Maktubat-i Imam Rabbani*, op. cit., Letter No. 94.

³⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 83.

³⁵. Ibid.

The situation at the court was extremely bad for both Abdullah Sultanpuri and Abdun Nabi and in this Badauni had also played some role. Soon after his admission in service, in the discussion of *Ibadat Khana* he had also strongly denounced orthodox *ulema*. He himself writes:

“the emperor made me dispute with the sages who boast of their depth of science...by the grace of God...I overcame most of them. Shaikh Abdun Nabi was very much offended with me...he used to take myself in disputation.”³⁶

Although in his later life he became sympathetic towards them and the *ulema* had been discredited and Akbar completely lost confidence in them.

It seems now important to discuss the role of Shaikh Mubarak and his son Abul Fazl in distancing Akbar from Islam. Shaikh Mubarak was accused of being a *Mehdvi* and at instance of Shaikh Abdun Nabi. The Emperor ordered his expulsion from the empire. As consequence he and his family members suffered great hardship and after great pursuation of Mirza Aziz Koka, he was pardoned.³⁷

Although it could not be proved that he really followed *Mehdvism* but he was against orthodoxy and generally held extremely liberal religion views

³⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 172-3.

³⁷. Ibid., pp. 198-9; This event also has been mentioned by Abul Fazl, *Ain-i Akbari*, ed., Sir Syed, Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh, reprint. 2005, Vol. II, p. 249; *Har Seh Daftar Abul Fazl*, ed. by Mehdi Ali Khan, Baitus Saltanate, Lucknow, H. 1270, Vol. III, p. 242.

orthodox *ulema* were opposed to him leveled allegations of such nature. Abul Fazl writes that:

“my father due to his attitude of the independent thought and pursuing the conventionality, accused by *ulema* of that time of attachment to the *mehdvi* doctrine.”³⁸

Badauni also testify that Shaikh Mubarak did not follow the tenets of orthodox Islam. He writes:

“he (Shaikh Mubarak), followed various rules of life, for sometimes during the reign of Afghan emperor, he used to keep the company with Shaikh Alai³⁹ and the beginning of emperor’s reign Naqshbandi order was in great steam, he adopted himself to their rule....and at last when the Iraqis (Shias) were in great favour at court, he spoke as one of their religion...he wrote a commentary....contained in four volumes named it *Mamba ul Nafa isi-l- Uyun*. The strange thing is that in the exordium to that commentary he wrote certain passages which seem to contain pretensions to the establishment of new principle in religion.”⁴⁰

Shaikh Mubarak’s son Abul Fazl was a genius of his time and was trained under the guidance of his father. His writings clearly indicate that he was liberal in his religious views and strongly opposed to orthodox *ulema* designated as *Taqliddi* (blind follower). About his intellectual experiences, he writes:

³⁸. *Ain-i Akbari*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 249.

³⁹. For the details of Shaikh Alai, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit, Vol. I, pp. 395-404.

⁴⁰. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. III, p. 74.

“I traversed the wide field of wisdom and the ample space of the doctrine of many schools ... By the favour of the font of lofty ideas, the secret of Platonist (*Ishraqian*).⁴¹ The hidden treasures of Sufis, and the wondrous of the perepatetics (*Mashshayan*)⁴² were acquired by me.”⁴³

In summing up the discussion about the ideology of Abul Fazl, one would say that he was the person of non-conventionality like his father and his thoughts were totally different from the orthodox section of *ulema*.

Thus, it seems the ground was prepared by father and son to resist *ulema*, on the ground of ideological differences as well as their personal antagonism.

Now, let us back to the affairs of Makhdumul Mulk and Abdullah Sultanpuri, who were the religious stalwart of the court. As already it has been discussed that they were at loggerheads at the court. They were indulged in mutual recriminations, and used abusive language against for each other even in the in the presence of the Emperor. Makhdumul was accused of not paying *zekat* and concealing the gold and silver coins in the graves of his ancestors. Abdun Nabi had also lost favour of the Emperor.

⁴¹. The *Ishraqi* philosophical school was founded by Shahabuddin Yahya Suherwardi (d.1191).

⁴². Muslim philosophical school based on Aristotalion ideology.

⁴³. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, ed. Agha Ahmad Ali and Abdur Rahim, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1873-77, Vol. III, p. 387.

Shaikh Mubarak and his son created opportunities for him in this regard against them. Other new arrivals especially Gilani brothers, Fathullah Shirazi and other Iranian intellectuals also played important role against orthodox section. As a consequence the position of both religious stalwart declined in the court. They were not in a position to match with the Abul Fazl. In comparison to Abul Fazl their knowledge was only restricted to the theological subjects. They were defendless when philosophical issues came into discussion. Abul Fazl uprooted them easily as Badauni says:

“He (Abul Fazl) fell boldly into disputation in religious matters with imbecile old men as the *Sadr*. (Abdun Nabi)...and Makhdumul Mulk, and had not the slightest hesitation in putting them to shame at which emperor was pleased.By dint of own exertion, and the assistance of his father (Shaikh Mubarak) and the patronage of emperor, he cast them (*ulema*) all in short space of time to the ground of scorn and contempt.”⁴⁴

The issue of the *Mehzar* brought last jolt to these orthodox *ulema*. Shaikh Mubarak prepared a document in which Akbar was given the position of *Sultan-i-Adil*. Now he (Akbar) became superior authority ahead of *Mujtahid*. This document bore the confirmation of *ulema* in the form of their signature.⁴⁵ Even Abdun Nabi and Makhdumul Mulk were forcibly brought against their

⁴⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 263.

⁴⁵. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 271-72 and Vol. III, p. 83.

wishes and compelled to sign on the documents.⁴⁶ After the issuing of *Mehzar*, both *ulema*, Abdun Nabi and Abdullah Sultanpuri, could not live peacefully and they were compelled to leave India in 1580.⁴⁷

Badauni considers their quarrel with each other, and their wrong deeds as the reasons for their expulsion. But, the reasons given by him is not very clear, and they are in between the lines. But Abul Fazl tried to clarify it in his writings. He condemned both *ulema* for their ignorance. According to him they did not deserve for so lofty positions, which they possessed since long time. The emperor did not expose them and sent them to Mekkah. Akbar also gives the hint of an enquiry to set up against them, which ultimately went against them. The words of Abul Fazl are:

“this time when wisdom had obtained high position and there was a daily market for investigation, the veil over the deeds of Abdun Nabi and Mulla Sultanpuri was withdrawn. They in consequences of fiction and phenakisms, and backing of simpletons, who did not know the facts, had taken their seats on the *Masnads* of priority and were actively employed ministering their own desires and in self gratification. It was perceived that they had acquired nothing beyond the first elements of routine...and they know nothing of science and had nothing but long tongue and a vending stores (*Naql Faroshi*) as is the rule with the ignorant and prating. With all

⁴⁶. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 83.

⁴⁷. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 277-78; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p. 267.

empty handedness they had but a small portion of piety...and regarded pride and presumption as their greatness....the tolerant and benevolent prince did notdesire that this crew should be more exposed ...He allotted then the office of *Mir Haj*....In this way...he expelled them from empire".⁴⁸

Maasir-ul Umara gives a different picture of this situation. According to *Maasir-ul Umara*, Mekhdumul Mulk and Abdun Nabi, after the issuing *Mehzar* had returned from public life and started telling all that their signature had been obtained by force on *Mehzar* and its contents were illegal.⁴⁹ It spread discontent among the *ulema* when Akbar was informed about this behaviour of Makhdumul Mulk and Abdun Nabi he decided to expel them from India.⁵⁰ The information from *Ma'asir-ul Umara* suggests that they were expelled from India, because of their opposition of Akbar's experiments.

In 1581, rebellions broke out in Bengal and by Mirza Muhammad Hakim⁵¹ this news reached to exiled ulema in Mekkah, and both stalwart decided to returned back when they reached India, Makhdumul Mulk died in Gujarat. According to *Ma'asir-ul Umara* he was poisoned and his dead body was buried in Jalandhur⁵² and Abdun Nabi was brought to the court as

⁴⁸. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 277-78.

⁴⁹. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 563.

⁵⁰. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 563.

⁵¹. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 369-70, *Muntakhb-ut-Tawarikh*, Vol. II, p. 311.

⁵². *Maasir-ul-Umara*, Vol. III, p. 257.

prisoner.⁵³ According to Badauni in the court he behaved rudely. Akbar slapped on the face of Abdun Nabi. He replied courageously 'why don't you strike with a knife'. Badauni and Abul Fazl both inform that there were some financial irregularities, in the amount which had been handed over to, both *ulema* to distribute as alms to the needy people in Mekkah.⁵⁴ Abul Fazl informs about Akbar's anxiety to receive an acknowledgement from Sharif of Makkah of the presents and money sent with Abdun Nabi and Makhdumul Mulk.⁵⁵

However, Abdun Nabi was handed over to Todar Mal to enquire about that money. In the prison he was strangled by a Mob.⁵⁶ *Ma'asir-ul Umara* tells, he was strangled by Abul Fazl.⁵⁷ This testimony of *Ma'asir-ul Umara* is based on *Iqbal nama-i-Jahangiri*. Strange thing is in the writing of Abul Fazl who did not inform about the conditions in which Abdun Nabi died. He simply states that 'he was sent to the school of instruction and there the cup of his life over flowed.'⁵⁸

⁵³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p. 311.

⁵⁴. Ibid.; Abul Fazl, *Maktubat-i-Allami*, Vol. I, tr. Mansura Haidar, New Delhi, 1998, letter to Sharif of Makkah, p. 2.

⁵⁵. *Maktubat-i-Allami*, Ibid., p. 2.

⁵⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 301.

⁵⁷. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 563.

⁵⁸. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 387.

An Assessment:

So, it was tragic end for both ulema. Now we conclude as how much history is fairer to them? The different blames put on them by Badauni, might be correct to some extent but story about Makhdumul Mulk that he escaped from *zakat* through a trick, why had it not been mentioned by Abul Fazl.

According to Badauni after the death of Makhdumul Mulk, Mughal officials found graves of his ancestors full of treasures. Why this wrong deed again skipped by Abul Fazl who blamed on Makhdumul Mulk for his so called financial irregularities.

Abdun Nabi was prisoned and investigated for the forgery of amount which was given to him when he was departing for Mekkah. If had he been culprit, he should have been punished according to law but he was murdered. Therefore, it appears that no defalcation could be proved.

There contemporary historians projected them corrupt, egoist, power seeker, ignorant, fool, but if had it so, why they could not adjust themselves in circle of other sycophants of court? If they were so worthless, why emperor could not execute them in public when he had no fear of opposition? Indeed they had some faults, but their history needs more research to unveil the hidden truth, and to give real and moderate picture of them.

4.4 SHAIKH MUBARAK

He had been distinguished person during his time. His religious ideology was not the like of his other contemporary orthodox *ulema*. Though he obtained an orthodox theological education at Ahmadabad, he later, turned towards *Sufism* and *Ishraq* (the philosophy of illumination) and the truth of Ibn-i Arbi and contemporary Egyptian poet, Ibn-i Fariz and Ibn-i Arbi's disciple and interpreter, Sadruddin.⁵⁹

Abul Fazl informs us that his ancestor belonged to Yamen. Shaikh Musa was the first person who came to India in the fifteenth century and settled at Sind.⁶⁰ Shaikh Musa adopted the life of ascetic and devoted his life in prayers and other sufistic practices or worship. His descendants also followed him in this respect.⁶¹ In the fifteenth century a member of his family wished to visit to the saints of India. During his journey, he reached to Nagour. There he came in contact with the sufis of that place. The most prominent sufis whom he met were the Mir Sayyed Yahya Bukhari, Shiekh Abdur Razzaq Qadiri and Shaikh Yusuf. These three saints made such an impact on Shiekh Khizr that he decided to stay at Nagour permanently.⁶²

⁵⁹. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1877, Vol. II, p. 261.

⁶⁰. Ibid., p. 259.

⁶¹. Ibid.

⁶². Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., p. 259.

In 1505, a son was born to Shaikh Khizr. He was given the name 'Mubarak'. When he was a child his father Shaikh Khizr left the place near Sind and brought his family to Nagour. But on his way to Nagour he fell ill and died.⁶³ Now whole responsibilities fell on the shoulder of Shaikh Mubarak's mother. Shaikh Mubarak was an infant child at that time. His mother had managed his education very efficiently. Mubarak studied under the instructions of the prominent saints of his time. One of his earlier teachers was Shaikh Attan.⁶⁴ When he grew up he came with contact of Shaikh Ubaidullah Ahrar.⁶⁵

Shaikh Mubarak was so much brilliant student that his prodigious achievement filled enmity among the other Shaikhzadas.⁶⁶ He and his mother had to bear insult by them. But somehow they were controlled by Shaikh Abdur Razzaq Qadri and Shaikh Yusuf Sindi, the old friends of Shaikh Khizr.⁶⁷ In 1535, when Maldew annexed Nagour, Shaikh Mubarak left for Ahmadabad. In the middle of these developments his mother died.⁶⁸

⁶³. Ibid., p. 260.

⁶⁴. Ghausi Shattari, *Gulzar-i Abar*, Linderiano, p. 143; also see S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign*, New Delhi, p. 78.

⁶⁵. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, Ibid., p. 261.

⁶⁶. Specially the male member of *Sufi's* family.

⁶⁷. Shaikh Mubarak's Letter (Manchester, MS), f. no. 280b; also see S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign*, op.cit., pp.78-79.

⁶⁸. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, Ibid., p. 261.

In Ahmadabad, he came in contact of *Sufis* of different orders and philosophical ideologies. Abul Fazl informs us that his father studied *Hanafi*, *Maliki*, *Hambali* and *Shafaii* doctrines, the four school of Sunni Jurisprudence. Apart from studying these traditional sciences, he also received instruction in the philosophies of Ibne Sina and Shahabuddin Suhrawardi Yahya Maqtl under the guidance of Khatib Abul Fazl Kazaruni.⁶⁹ Famous religio-philosophical treatises had been studied by Shaikh Mubarak such as *Kitabul Shifa* of Ibn-i Sina and its summary *Al- Ishrat-i Tambihat* and Ptolemy's *Almagest*.⁷⁰

Various *sufi* orders also attracted Shaikh Mubarak. Abul Fazl states, 'he (Mubarak) also fell in with many doctors of *Sattari*, *Tayfucri*, *Chishti* and *Suhrawardi*'.⁷¹ Two famous sufis who inspired Shaikh Mubarak were Shaikh Umar of Thattah and Shaikh Yusuf. This acquaintance of sufis developed mystic tendencies in him. Shaikh Yusuf recognised it, and restrained his desire to indulge in the life of wanderer ascetics. Shaikh Yousuf advised Shaikh Mubarak to visit Agra and to engage in further quest of learning.⁷²

⁶⁹. He was a native of Shiraz and was invited by Gujarat from Iran. He studied philosophy under Maulana Muhiuddin Ashkbar and from Khawajah Hasan disciple of famous fourteenth century philosopher Sharif jarjani (d. 1413). He also studied under Jalaluddin Dawwani, a famous scholar of Ishraqi School of thought.

⁷⁰. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 261.

⁷¹. Ibid., p. 262.

⁷². Ibid.

In 1543, he reached to Agra, where he came in touch with Shaikh Alauddin Majzub, known as Alaul Balaul. He was an ascetic,⁷³ a girl of a rich family who attached to the Quraish, was married to him.

According to Abul Fazl her family had wealth and pomp. This family offered Shaikh Mubarak to live a life of comfort but he was not ready to leave his way of life of seclusion and studies.⁷⁴

He started lectures in his house, where few selected sincere persons were allowed to join. But Abul Fazl informs that “among the gathering of friends and there were also conclaves of envious, but these did not depress him, not those elate”⁷⁵ His popularity began to spread and rulers, Sher Shah and Islam Shah proposed to grant him stipend from state, but he declined much offers. According to Abul Fazl this act of regretting of state grant, and raised his own reputation.⁷⁶ In his early years at Agra he was strict in following *Shariat* and spirit. Badauni in this connection writes:

“He (Mubarak) was so zealous in enforcing the command and prohibitions of the holy law (Shareat) that if any body was present while he was giving religious instructions wearing a golden ring or silk clothing or red hase or red or yellow garments, he at once made him remove them, and if anyone

⁷³. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., p. 262.

⁷⁴. Ibid.

⁷⁵. Ibid., p. 263.

⁷⁶. Ibid.

appeared with long breeches deseeding below, the heel, he immediately,, had them torn to the proper length. If white walking through the streets he heard the nouse of any singing he would start violently".⁷⁷

He never provoked anyone, had no desire to oppose anyone, but he never hesitated hesitates to give his opinion on religious matters. When Shaikh Alai⁷⁸ an eminent *mehdvi* saint was summoned at the court off Islam Shah and a group of *ulema* questioned him of his religious belief, Shaikh Alai openly condemned the ulema including Abdullah Sultanpuri, especially for their way of life. Shaikh Mubarak came to his rescue of Shaikh Alai and gave the title of *Saifullah* to one of his supporter Mahmud Khan.⁷⁹ Abdullah Sultanpuri, who hold an important position in the court of Islam Shah, was also condemned by Shaikh Alai. Shaikh Alai had to bear his wrath and he was beaten to death at his stance.

His alliance with Shaikh Alai labeled him of being *mehdvism*. However, he could manage to save his life.

Now, political scenario of north India had changed and Humayun recaptured his lost territory. But suddenly he died and Hemu got prominence for a short period. He was killed in the battle of Panipat and Mughal rule under

⁷⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 73.

⁷⁸. Also see in Chapter 2.

⁷⁹. See for example S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixseenth and Seventeenth Century*, Agra, 1965, pp. 265-66.

Akbar firmly established. During these trouble years Shaikh Mubarak led a secluded life and devoted himself to teaching and learning.⁸⁰

There occurred a famous incident in his life which reflects Shaikh Mubarak's theological ability and the firmness in expression of right opinion. In this sixth decade of sixteenth century (1550-60) due to failure of rain and continued wars crops were damaged and severe famine damaged areas of Delhi and Agra. There was acute shortage of grains and as a consequence people started selling their children to save themselves and their children from starvation. Hence a *Fatwa* legalize the selling of children was issued with the signature of leading *ulema* of Agra. Shaikh Mubarak who was also present in Agra refused to sign and sent Abdul Qadir Badauni who was his student, to Shaikh Hatim Sambhli to examine the *Fatwa* in the light of his comments. Shaikh Hatim agreed with Shaikh Mubarak's views and subsequently the *fatwa* was ignored by the majority of *ulema*.⁸¹

After the establishment of Mughal rule in India, Shaikh Mubarak, continued his secluded life and his favourite profession of teaching. It occasionally he gave lectures on various philosophical aspects:

“The science and its many branches and learning of every trend now diffused. New elucidations high and lofty views and important discoveries were published abroad and all classes of

⁸⁰. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 263.

⁸¹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 69-70.

men received countless benefits from the treasury of intellect...and the highest topics were matters of discussion.”⁸²

Abul Fazl writes that a number of *ulema* were jealous of his father and often raised the issue of his support to Shaikh Alai.⁸³ Badauni largely corroborates Abul Fazl on this issue.⁸⁴ However, in 1569-70, Mubarak’s family had to face the open enmity of orthodox classes.

The immediate cause of this antagonism was a debate on same religious issue between Abul Fazl and a prominent *Alim* of the court. Abul Fazl writes that one day Shaikh Mubarak and Abul Fazl went to visit a holy person. A *Alim* also was already present there and was expressing his opinion on some religious issue. Abul Fazl interrupted him some and in the course of discussion difference arose and Abul Fazl, put his opinion boldly. Jadunath Sarkar speculates that he must be Makhdumul-Mulk.⁸⁵ This forceful intervention of Abul Fazl who was a mere teenager at that time, filled that *Alim* with anger and he decided to take action against Shaikh Mubarak’s family. Some modern historians are of the view that *Alim* was Makhdumul Mulk.⁸⁶

⁸². Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol. II, p.264.

⁸³. Ibid., pp. 265-66.

⁸⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 199-200.

⁸⁵. *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. by H. Jarret, reprint, Delhi, 2001, Vol. III, p. 495, f.n 15, note by J. N. Sarkar

⁸⁶. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 266-267.

The old issue of his support to *Mehdavis* was again raised and he was accused of being a *mehdavi*. Shaikh Abdun Nabi and Makhdumul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri, along with other *Ulema*, represented to the Emperor that Shaikh Mubarak, 'he pretended to be Mehdi and belong to the class of innovators (*Ahl-i-Bedat*) and was not only himself damned but led others to damnation.'⁸⁷ Therefore, string action should be taken against him. The Emperor who was under their influence issued the following order:

"affairs of the state were not to be transacted without consultation with *ulema*; that this was the question of Faith and religion, the issue of which lay entirely in the *ulema*'s hand, that the fugitive should be summoned before judicial tribunal and whatever the illustrious law decided, and heads of the government determined should be carried out".⁸⁸

Immediately after this order was issued officers were sent to remove him, they dispatched police to bring him before emperor, but, the Shaikh who was already informed about this order escaped along with his family.⁸⁹

Shaikh Mubarak and his family had face great difficulty during the period because due to the fear of court order nobody was ready to give them shelter.⁹⁰ Even Shaikh Salim Chishti advised him to seek shelter on Gujarat.⁹¹

⁸⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 199-200.

⁸⁸. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol.II, p. 269.

⁸⁹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 199-200.

⁹⁰. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 266-273.

However after intervention of Mirza Aziz Koka⁹² he was pardoned and allowed to come to the court.⁹³ But matter did not solve, and Mubarak had to hide himself. Some friends of Mubarak began to impress Emperor about the learning and piety of Shaikh Mubarak. Somehow, Akbar summoned the Shaikh Mubarak to the court at last. Shaikh Mubarak and Faizi visited the court.⁹⁴

Shaikh Mubarak was a strict follower of *Sharia* and was approved to music even *Sama*.⁹⁵ But when he visited and went around Delhi the Shrines, his attitude towards *Sama* changed.⁹⁶

Abul Fazl also changed his way of life, and visited the dignitaries of the court. Badauni refers to their visit to the residence of Makhdumul Mulk.⁹⁷

In 1573, when Akbar returned from Gujarat campaign to Fatehpur Sikari, a large number of people reached to congratulate him. Shaikh Mubarak also presented himself before the Emperor or addressed him with the following laudatory works⁹⁸,

⁹¹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 199.

⁹². Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 273.

⁹³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 199.

⁹⁴. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol.II, p. 274.

⁹⁵. Ibid., p. 275; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. III, p. 73.

⁹⁶. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 275.

⁹⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 70-72.

⁹⁸. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 39.

“By his wide capacity and good administration of the outer world he may become the *peshwa* of the spiritual kingdom, and it is for this purpose that such glorious victories have been unveiled.”⁹⁹

Smith makes very significant observation on Shaikh Mubarak concept Peshwa made on this occasion. He writes:

“When he returned as triumphant from Gujarat, Shaikh Mubarak had gratified him (Akbar) by expressing the hope that the Emperor might become spiritual as well as political head of the people. Hint given in 1573, had never been forgotten either by its (*mehzar*) author or the sovereign...in 1579...(Mubarak) proposed momentous innovation, ...and by expressing the hope that the Emperor might become the spiritual as well as political had of people”.¹⁰⁰

Smith observes that Akbar did not forget the counsel of Mubarak and implemented it after six years, seems correct, because Badauni also states:

“Shaikh Mubarak had added at the bottom that he most willingly signed his name. For this was a matter to which for several years he had been anxiously looking forward.”¹⁰¹

We have discussed alone the circumstances which ultimately led Akbar to accept the suggestion of Mubarak to take the lead in religious matters also. Therefore a draft was prepared by Shaikh Mubarak on which following prominent *ulema* also signed.

⁹⁹. Ibid.

¹⁰⁰. V. A. Smith, *Akbar The Great Mogul*, Delhi, reprint, 1966, p. 127.

¹⁰¹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 272.

(1) Shaikh Mubarak; (2) Hakimul Mulk, (3) Shaikh Abdun Nabi; (4) Abdullah Sultanpuri (5) Ghazi Khan Badakshi (6) Qazi Jalaluddin Multai (7) Sadr Jahan Mufti¹⁰²

Mahzar declared Akbar as *Sultan-i-Adil*, a position that is higher than *Mujtahid* (interpreter of law). Now he could entertain any opinion of the *Mujtahids*, in the matter of religion. Thus, he was able to issue order that was not against the Quran.

The position that was given to Akbar by *Mehzar* was actually lured by Shaikh Mubarak to him. It does not seem a good intentioned task by Mubarak as claimed in *Mehzar*, that this position of Akbar for the “real benefit of the nation”¹⁰³ A person like Akbar who did not acquire a systematic education, how could give any judgment in the complex conflicting matters of religion. This decree was not to be solved the problems but for the exaltation of position of Akbar. After 1580, religious matters had not been important point of discussion in the court. Badauni states:

“His majesty told forty courtiers to sit downany one brought question (before them) connected with law or religion they said ‘you had better ask the Mullas about it, as we only settle things which appeal to man’s reason’”.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰². Ibid., Vol. II, p. 270.

¹⁰³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 272.

¹⁰⁴. Ibid., p. 308.

Therefore, it is easy to assume that Akbar was not interested to solve religious disputations but, his only desire was to attain supreme position.

Akbar was not satisfied with the position, provided by *Mahzar*. According to Irfan Habib, 'However document became irrelevant, since Akbar with Abul Fazl as his major confidant in religion and ideological matters, was not content, with merely the power to propound and implement a royal version of Sharia'.¹⁰⁵ However, Mubarak had played his part, and desires of Akbar had fulfilled. Shaikh Mubarak joined the circle of disciple of Akbar.¹⁰⁶

His religious leaning has changed in his later stage of life. Any trait of his earlier religious tendencies did not remain in him. Badauni states about his later on changed religious attitude in these words:

"Towards the end of his life, when his sight failed him and he was unable to read, he went into retirement, and wrote a commentary...in four volumes and named it *Mamba'u'-Nafa'isl-I-Uyun*. The strange thing is that in the exordium of that commentary he wrote certain passages which seem to contain pretensions to establishment of new principle in religion".¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵. Irfan Habib, "A Political Theory for The Mughal Empire – A Study of Ideas of Abul Fazl", *PIHC*, 1998, p. 330.

¹⁰⁶. *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. by Blochman, Low Price Publication, Delhi (reprint) 2001, Vol. I, pp. 218-19.

¹⁰⁷. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 74.

Another example of his deviation from his earlier religious attitude, also comes from the writings of Badauni, he narrates the events of 1583-84:

“Shaikh Mubarak of Nagour said in the presence of the emperor to Birbal, ‘Just as there are interpolations in holy books, so there are in ours, hence it is impossible to trust either.’¹⁰⁸

Shaikh Mubarak lived a long life and died in Lahore in 1593 at the age of 88 years.¹⁰⁹

4.5 ABUL FAZL

Abul Fazl was second son of Shaikh Mubarak. He was born in 1551.¹¹⁰ He was fortunate enough to have a high quality teacher in his father since his childhood. Evidences suggest that he was a prodigious child. Abul Fazl himself informs that:

“At a little over one years of age I had the miraculous gifts of fluent speech and at five years of age, I had acquired an unusual stock of information and could both read and write”.¹¹¹

He completed his education mainly under his father.¹¹² Shaikh Mubarak taught him traditional and secular sciences. But it seems that it could not subdue his curiosity and he fell in depression. Abul Fazl states:

¹⁰⁸. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 312.

¹⁰⁹. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 402 and Vol. III, p. 74.

¹¹⁰. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 276.

¹¹¹. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 276-77.

“Although my intelligence grew I gained no deep impression from the school of learning. Some times I understand nothing at all, at others doubts suggested themselves which my tongue was incapable of explaining...I used to weep in public and put all the blame upon myself.”¹¹³

This state of mind of Abul Fazl could recover with the help of his friend. He did not mention his name.¹¹⁴ After that Abul Fazl, indulged in deep study, and spent ten whole years in studying, and in acquiring knowledge of various subjects. He states:

“For ten years longer I made no distinction between night and days, teaching and learning, and recognized no difference between satiety and hunger...nor had I power to discover pain from pleasure. I acknowledged nothing else but the bond of demonstration and tie of knowledge...two or sometimes three days passed without my taking food and that my studious spirit had no inclination (for food)”¹¹⁵

He gave new dimensions to old topics of different subjects. He examined critically all works those he studies, and established his own opinion. He did not accept any opinion regarding old established subjects, but formed his

¹¹². Irfan Habib, “A Political Theory for The Mughal Empire – A Study of Ideas of Abul Fazal”, op.cit., p. 330; In his discussion about his early age and education, Abul Fazl does not mention any other teacher, Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 276-278.

¹¹³. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 277.

¹¹⁴. Ibid.

¹¹⁵. Ibid.

independent judgment, on the basis of his readings.¹¹⁶ He was so extraordinary student that his companions also used to take notes from him. One of the works namely *Al-Mutawwal*¹¹⁷ had been brought to him by his companion and he dictated some notes to them from that book.¹¹⁸

He restored an old book which had been half destroyed by ants is another example which testify his outstanding knowledge. This book was in the form manuscript. He cut away its destroyed portion and pasted new paper to each page and then commenced to restore the missing halves of each line, in which he succeeded. Sometimes afterwards, a complete copy of the same work came out with slight different from original one, and as a whole, the restored portion was approximately similar to the original book.¹¹⁹

Shaikh Mubarak's teaching, and Abul Fazl's personal reading, made him well-acquainted with *Maqulat* and *Manqulat* (rational and revealed) sciences.¹²⁰

About his range of knowledge he himself writes:

“By the favour of the fount of lofty of lofty ideas (Shaikh Mubarak), the secrets of Platonists (*Ishraqun*), the wide

¹¹⁶. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 277.

¹¹⁷. The name of celebrated commentary of Saduddin Masud Taftazani (d. 1389) on the *Talkhisu-i-Meftah* of Shaikh Imam Jalaiddin Muhammad (d. 1338).

¹¹⁸. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. H. Blochmann, Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 277-78.

¹¹⁹. *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. by Blochman, op.cit., p. xxxiv.

¹²⁰. Ibid.

treasure of Sufis, and the wondrous observations of Peripatetic (*Mashahyan*/Aristotalians) were acquired by me.”¹²¹

In this section, we are not concerned, that what misery and pain he suffered when his family was running away from the wrath of court *ulema*. It had been already dealt in the section of Shaikh Mubarak.

Here we discuss mainly his response when he enter in the court after sufferings of his misery days. We are also concerned with the ideological background of Abul Fazl which later on reflected, in his ideas.

1573, Abul Fazl entered in the court at Agra.¹²² But this visit of Abul Fazl was very short and it seems he did not join court permanently. In 1574, when Akbar was in *Jami* Mosque at Fethpur Sikri, Abul Fazl met him¹²³ and presented a commentary on Quranic Chapter *Fath*.¹²⁴ Badauni gives the detail of arrival of Abul Fazl for second time. He states:

“It was during these days that Abul Fazl, son of Shaikh Mubarak of Nagor, came the second time to court. He is the man that set the world in flames.... He led before the Emperor

¹²¹. *Akbar Nama*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 387.

¹²². *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 173; *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 388.

¹²³. *Akbar Nama*, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 114-15.

¹²⁴. See also S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign*, op. cit., p. 106.

a commentary on *Ayatul Kursi*¹²⁵ people said it was written by his father.”¹²⁶

In 1575, *Ibadat Khana* had been established. In the *Ibadat Khana* the nature of debates in early days were not multidimensional. Badauni informs about that form of earlier discussions in the presence of Akbar. He states:

“His majesty had come in close contact with ascetics and custodians of exalted tomb of the late Khawajah (Muinuddin Chishti) and passed much of his time in discussing the word of God (Quran) and word of Prophet (*Hadis*) Question regarding Sufism, learned discussions, enquires into subtleties of philosophy and *fiqh* increasingly attracted his Majesty’s attention. He spent whole nights in repeating the name of Almighty God.”¹²⁷

Ibadat Khana was constructed in the same year on the deserted hospice of Mian Abduliah Niyazi, a disciple of Shaikh Salim Chishti¹²⁸ and who had joined the group of *mehdvis*. In initial stages, in the *Ibadat Khana* few persons had been invited and particular type of topics had been discussed.¹²⁹ But slowly and gradually the nature of discussions changed. Badauni states: ‘He (Akbar) named that cell the *Ibadat Khana*, but gradually came to known as *Iyadat*

¹²⁵. Verses of *Quran*, II, p. 256.

¹²⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 198.

¹²⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 200.

¹²⁸. *Ibid.*, p. 201.

¹²⁹. *Ibid.*, p. 202.

Khana (a house for visitation of Sick)¹³⁰ Here Badauni wants to suggest that *Ibadat Khana* became a place where such discussion and activities took place, which was not accordance with Islam.

In 1575, Geelani brothers came to the court¹³¹ in 1576 Sharif Amuli joined the court¹³² and other intellectual were also admitted in the court. It appears that in 1576-77, the atmosphere of court began to change. Before this development there was no one who dared to challenge the authority of orthodox section of the court. But mutual fight among the *ulema* for their superiority degraded their position. Shaikh Abdun Nabi and Abdullah Sultanpuri used to use abusive languages for each other even in the presence of emperor.¹³³ *Ulema* tended to lose control when they could not subdue their opponents. Badauni says, 'one night, all at once the vein in neck of *ulema* of the time swelled up, and a horrid noise and clamor ensued. His majesty got very angry at their rude behaviour.'¹³⁴ We do not need to go into the details of errors of the orthodox *ulema* which has already been discussed above in detail. Here we are only concerned with the attitude of Abul Fazl.

¹³⁰. Ibid., pp. 201-02.

¹³¹. Ibid., p. 211.

¹³². Ibid., p. 245.

¹³³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 255.

¹³⁴. Ibid., p. 202.

In his initial stages he did not dare to counter orthodox *ulema*. Once, Abul Fazl and Badauni visited Abdullah Sultanpuri he presented his point of view on a book *Rauzatu-l-Ahbab*. But Badauni contradicted with the views of Abdullah Sultanpuri and a debate took place between Abdullah Sultanpuri and Badauni. Abul Fazl had remained as silent spectator; he did not dare to say even a single word.¹³⁵ It was Akbar who caught the persons who were to counter the opinion of the *ulema* of the court and in this regard Abul Fazl was the best option for him. According to Badauni the commentary on *Ayat al Kursi*, presented to Akbar by Abul Fazl was basically the work of Shaikh Mubarak. Nevertheless the emperor admired it 'chiefly because he expected to find in Abul Fazl a man capable of teaching the *mullas* a lesson (whose pride certainly resembles that of Pharaoh)'.¹³⁶ The same expectations were sought by Akbar from Badauni but in this regard Badauni says, 'though this expectation (from Abul Fazl) was opposed to the confidence which His majesty had placed in author of these pages'.¹³⁷ The favour given by Akbar to Abul Fazl had proved vital point for the medieval Indian history. Abul Fazl changed the whole scenario which was previously dominated by orthodox section. According to

¹³⁵. Ibid., pp. 70-72.

¹³⁶. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 198.

¹³⁷. Ibid.

Badauni, ‘he (Abul Fazl) is the man that set the world in flames, he lighted up the lamp of Sabahisand representing himself as opposed to all sects’.¹³⁸

Athar Abbas Rizvi, a modern historian observed this situation in this way:

“Abul Fazl played a vital role in the debates (of *Ibadat Khana*) he mobilized the support of all those scholars and nobles whom Shaikh Abdun Nabi had alienated. He so directed the discussion that the position of *ulema* became awkward and by manipulating the opportunities that arose, he skillfully managed to turn the tables on them”¹³⁹

The court *ulema*, who were well versed in traditional learning could not face the attack of Abdul. Their bent of mind was not prepared for such type of philosophical discussion that was presented by Abul Fazl and his associates. Traditional *ulema* like Ghazali who was believed as an authority by Sunni orthodox *ulema* had been criticized by Abul Fazl.¹⁴⁰ *Ulema* were answerless before Abul Fazl. They could not understand new dimensions of criticism of old established ideas. Badauni states on the situation, ‘the discussion passed

¹³⁸. Ibid., p. 198.

¹³⁹. See also S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign*, op.cit., p. 122.

¹⁴⁰. Muhammad Hashim Kashmi, *Zebdat-ul-Maqamat*, Lucknow, A.H. 1302, p. 131; also see Irfan Habib, “A Political Theory for The Mughal Empire – A Study of Ideas of Abul Fazal”, op.cit., p. 339, nd. 30.

beyond the scope of controversies of Sunnis and Shias, Hanafi and Shafii is and lawyers and philosophers; they attacked the very bases of Islam.’¹⁴¹

Shaikh Mubarak in his letter to Shaikh Faizi expresses some anxiety over the hostility that Abul Fazl was exciting by his debates among the “Black hearted grey beard (the theologians)” by his use of arguments both rational and spiritual (*Ulum-i-aqli-o-naqli*) that Mubarak themselves had taught him.¹⁴²

He proved to be a nemesis to the *ulema*, that they were ultimately ousted from the court. Badauni states:

“He (Abul Fazl) fell boldly into disputation in religious matters with such imbecile old men as the Sadr, the Qazi, the Hakim ul Mulk and Makhdum-ul-Mulk and had not slightest hesitation in putting them to shame, at which emperor was pleased....by dint of his own exertions and assistance of his father and the patronage of the Khalifa (Akbar) of the age, and by the favour of Fortune, he cost them all in a short space of time, down to the ground of scorn and contempt”.¹⁴³

There is no need to go into details of religious innovation and banishment of *ulema*, caused by defeat of the orthodox section in the religious discussion in which they proved unworthy. But what were the reasons for so

¹⁴¹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 255.

¹⁴². *Majma-ul-Afkar*, ed. by Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, Patna, 1993, pp. 22-23; see also Irfan Habib, “A Political Theory for The Mughal Empire – A Study of Ideas of Abul Fazal”, op.cit., p. 338, nd. 17.

¹⁴³. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 263.

much enmity of Abul Fazl with the orthodox section? For this purpose one would have to explore the intellectual background of Abul Fazl.

As already discussed that Abul Fazl was educated by his father Shaikh Mubarak who had the traits of free thinking, He developed curiosity to examine every matter in the light of reasons and logics in Abul Fazl.

The effect of *Ishraqi* philosophy¹⁴⁴ is also evident in Abul Fazl's ideas. He himself claims for his acquaintances with *Ishraqi* philosophy.¹⁴⁵ The sun becomes for *Ishraqis* a symbol of God derived spiritual lights (*Anwar-i-Qahira*).¹⁴⁶ Abul Fazl uses imagery, if not the terminology of *Ishraqi* tradition, He states:

“Royalty is a light from the Inimitable Almighty and ray from the world illuminating sun, the essence of books of perfection the assemblage of excellences. In the language of day it is called *Farr-i-Izidi* (divine light) in the ancient (Iranian) language, *Kaihan-Khwura* (world illuminating lights).”¹⁴⁷

A very important point to be noted here is that Abul Fazl refrains from using traditional adjective for Muslim ruler that is *Zill-i-Ilhai* (shadow of the God).

¹⁴⁴. See Chapter 2, for brief details of Shaikh Shahabuddin Yahya and his philosophy of *Ishraq*.

¹⁴⁵. *Akbar Nama*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 387.

¹⁴⁶. Irfan Habib, “Two Indian Theorists of the State, Barni and Abul Fazl”, *Middle East Studies Association*, Chicago, 1998, p. 13.

¹⁴⁷. *Ain-i Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 2.

In *Akbar Nama*, Abul Fazl has given the history of ancestors of Akbar from very beginning. According to him, Mangols came into existence caused by ‘a refulgent stream of Sun beams’¹⁴⁸ He placed Changez Khan as ‘ray of Devine light’.¹⁴⁹ Abul Fazl makes the light (*Nur*) of *Alanqawa*¹⁵⁰ revealed itself from the womb of Maryam Makani (Akbar’s mother) in the shape of Akbar¹⁵¹. In this discussion important aspects is the light (*Nur*). It seems an *Ishraqi* influence on the ideals of Abul Fazl. Azar Kaiwan, an Iranian philosopher and also an instrumental in the spread of *Ishraqi* philosophy in Iran, was invited to India. Though he did not visit India but he sent one of his works to the emperor which highly impressed Abul Fazl.¹⁵² Therefore, he had deep knowledge of *Ishraqi* philosophy.¹⁵³

Another aspect of Abul Fazl ideas came from the Islamic traditions. It was from the philosophy of Ibn-i-Arabi (d. 1240). According to Irfan Habib “it

¹⁴⁸. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 65.

¹⁴⁹. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 72.

¹⁵⁰. *Alanqawa* is a mythical lady of Mangol history.

¹⁵¹. *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁵². *Dabistan-i-Mazheb*, Ascribed to Zulfiqar Mobed, Munshi Naval Kishore Press, Lucknow, 1904, p. 326; see also S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar’s Reign*, op. cit., pp. 130-131.

¹⁵³. The spread of philosophy of Ishraq see, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “The personal works of Shaykh al Ishraq Shehab Al Din Suharwardi”, *The Islamic Quarterly*, Vol. XII, No. 1 and 2, January-June, 1968.

was most, significant influence on the ideology of Abul Fazl”¹⁵⁴ We already know that Shaikh Mubarak was well aware with the works and philosophy of Ibn-i-Arabi¹⁵⁵ Therefore, it is obvious that Abul Fazl was well aware with the philosophy of Ibn-ul-Arabi. There were always debates within Sufis about the validity of concept of ‘*Wahdatul Wujud*’ presented by Ibn-i-Arabi. Not only *Wahadat-ul-Wajood*, but after religious and philosophical concept, propounded by Ibn-i-Arabi, had long been matter of discussions and debates. A class of *sufis* and *ulema*, forbade their disciples to study it to whom they considered immature in the ecstatic knowledge. Once, Shaikh Bhikan (d. 1573) a famous *sufi* of Kakori in 16th century warned his disciple that the public discussions on the topic (*Wahadat-ul-Wujud*) bring misfortune for both speaker and listener.¹⁵⁶ Badauni informs about objection of Shaikh Bhikan, on to be making public the concept of *Wahdat-ul-Wujud*. He states, ‘the Shaikh never maintain the sufi mysteries in a public assembly ...if the mystical profession of the Unity of God (*Yakta-i-Tauheed*) be made in public it turn again solely to him who uttered it or to be learned men’.¹⁵⁷ *Yakta-i-Tauheed* seems a synonym of *Wahdat-ul-Wujud*.

¹⁵⁴. Irfan Habib, “A Political Theory for The Mughal Empire – A Study of Ideas of Abul Fazl”, op. cit., p. 331.

¹⁵⁵. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 261.

¹⁵⁶. K. A. Nizami, *Tarikhi Maqalat*, Delhi, 1965, p. 36.

¹⁵⁷. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 24.

Another eminent sufi of Sixteenth century Nizamuddin Ambethi used to discourage the study of the ideas of Ibn-i-Arabi. For instance, as Badauni indicates towards an incident that once Ambethi snatched the book *Fusus-ul-Hikam*¹⁵⁸ from the hand of Shaikh Abul Fath the son of Shaikh-ul-Hidaya and in return he gave him Another book¹⁵⁹ so it was a tendency among the *ulema* and *sufis*, to refrain, the study of ideas of Ibn-i-Arabi because they believed that, in spite of greatness of Ibn-i-Arabi in Sufistic knowledge, his teaching were dangerous for whom they believe immature in the religious learning and the mysteries of Sufism.

But Akbar came under the influence of ideas of Ibn-i-Arabi, if not in all but at least few which were suitable for his exaltation which he adopted. Shaikh Tajuddin of Ajodhan came into the contact of Akbar and became instrumental in the inducing the thoughts of Ibn-i-Arabi in the ideas of Akbar. Badauni gives in detail the meeting of Shaikh Tajuddin with Akbar. He states:

“the principle *ulema* call him (Tajuddin) *Taj ul Arfin*¹⁶⁰...was most excellent in Sufism, and in knowledge of theology, second only to Shaikh Ibn ul Arabi. Like the preceding he was drawn up the wall of castle in a blanket, and his majesty listened the whole night to his Sufic obscenities and follies. The Shaikh...introduced arguments concerning the unity of existence (*Wahdat-ul-Wujud*)

¹⁵⁸. Book written by Ibn-ul-Arabi.

¹⁵⁹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. III, p. 16.

¹⁶⁰. Crown of *Sufis*.

such as idle Sufis discuss, and which eventually lead to license and open heresy. He also interested the emperor in the question as to the fourth of Pharaoh, which is mentioned in the *Fusul-ul-Hikam*...thus he became chief cause in the weakening of Emperor's faith in the commands of Islam...he said that, expression *Insan-i-Kamil*, is referred to the Khalife of the age...and he invented a *Sijdah* (prostration) for him and called it *Zamin Bose*.¹⁶¹

Badauni's information suggest that Shaikh Tajuddin induced, the idea of *Insan-i-Khamil* is questionable because central position of *Insa-i-Kamil*, had been defended and elaborated by Sadruddin Qunawi (d. 1274), an eminent disciple of Ibn-i-Arabi.¹⁶² It is already established that Abul Fazl was well acquainted by the ideas of Sadr uddin Qunawi, therefore it is not believable that before the meeting of Akbar with Shaikh Tajuddin, Abul Fazl would have not introduced the concept of *Insan-i-Kamil* to Akbar. So it appears that it was not Tajuddin but Abul Fazl, who had made Akbar acquainted with the concept of *Insan-i-Kamil*.

Another group of unorthodox bent of mind to whom Abul Fazl came in contact was of *Nuqtavis*.¹⁶³ An important idea of *Nuqtavis* about their founder Mahmud Pasikhewani is that his body came in existence after attaining

¹⁶¹. *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 258-59.

¹⁶². *Encyclopedia of Islam*, New edition, Vol. VII, Leiden, 1995, p. 754.

¹⁶³. For details about Nuqtavis see Chapter 2.

maximum perfection through the long process of transmigration of soul.¹⁶⁴ Now we can drive from it that it was an idea of ‘more perfect being’. One would then claim for Akbar a Millenary status of *Insan-i-Kalm*, or *Saheb-i-Zama* on these speculations. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami gives a letter of Akbar to Iranian *Nuqtavi* scholar Saifuddin Kashi. This letter contains favourable opinion for *Naqtavis* of Iran, and particularly Sadidudidn Darwish Khusru, a prominent *Naqtavi* leader in Iran.¹⁶⁵ This letter shows a close proximity of Abul Fazl with *Nuqtavis*. Sharif Amuli Sani Khan of Herat and Tashbihi of Kashan, important *Nuqtavis* in the Mughal court, had been in close context with Abul Fazl. Testimony of Badauni confirms Abul Fazl’s close contacts with *Nuqtavis*. He states about Sani Khan of Heart that ‘He (Sani khan) also dedicated to Shaikh Abul Fazl a treatise after manner of *Nuqtavi* sect’.¹⁶⁶ But Irfan Habib is presenting other views regarding this is that ‘It is however fair to say that if Mahmud’s¹⁶⁷ theory of great spiritual souls born at particular periods, exercised any influence on Abul Fazl, he doest not either directly or indirectly himself show such influence anywhere’.¹⁶⁸ However, Abul Fazl was well acquainted with *Nuqtavi* ideas.

¹⁶⁴. Mohain Fani, *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, tr. by Shea and Troyer, Lahore, 1973, p. 337.

¹⁶⁵. K. A. Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, op. cit., Appendix X, pp. 373-78.

¹⁶⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 205.

¹⁶⁷. Founder of *Nuqtavi* Sect.

¹⁶⁸. Irfan Habib, “Two Indian Theorists of the State, Barni and Abul Fazl”, op.cit., p.

His links with different ideologies and philosophies perplexed him. He became wanderer in the field of different thoughts. He expresses his confusion in these words:

“A while my heart was drawn towards the sages of country of Cathay (Kara Khatai) and felt inclined towards the ascetics of mount Lebnon. Sometimes a desire for conversation with the Lamas of Tibet broke my peace, and sometimes sympathy with the Padris of Portugal pulled at my skirt. Sometimes a conference with *Mubid* of Persia and sometimes a knowledge of secrets of *Zand Avesta* robbed me of repose, for my soul was alienated from the society of both the sobered (*Arbab-i-Shaw*) and the (spiritually) drunken (*Ashab-i-Sukr*) of my land.”¹⁶⁹

So, this was the ideological roots of Abul Fazl. These philosophical trends turned him into a person having rational and logical bent of mind. Now let us again resume our discussion. Why did he play vital role to dislodge orthodox class of the court and how he was able to change the religious and intellectual atmosphere over there.

It appears that this philosophical amalgamation developed in his brain as a result of his curiosity to check everything on the basis of reasons and logic. The other reason was that he fed up with conventional religious ideas (*Taqlid*). Abul Fazl quotes from Akbar's saying the as follows:

“The case for pursuing reason (*Aql Pazhehi*) and rejection of traditionalism (*Taqlid*) is so clear that it does not need any

¹⁶⁹. *Akbar Nama*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 84.

argument for me. If tradition is to be held excellent, all prophets would have just followed their ancestral customs”¹⁷⁰

In another place he states, ‘the true the just sovereign, shall not seek popular acclaim through opposing reasons (*Aql*).’¹⁷¹ Therefore, a person who is having an enquiring mind and pragmatic thought was misfit in the conventional ideology of *ulema* at the court. According to Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, Abul Fazl had fed up with the whole technique of casuistry as developed by the Medieval Muslim theologians.¹⁷²

Despite the different ideological trends, personal reasons also contributed in provoking him to attack on traditional *ulema*. His sufferings and distress had already been discussed in details in the section of Shaikh Mubarak. It appears that when he entered in the court he began to work for the displacement of orthodox section gradually. Here a noteworthy development needs to be mentioned. When he came in contact with Akbar for the first time he did not present any philosophical treatise to him but he made an explanation of *Sura* of Quran i.e. *Ayat al Kursi*¹⁷³ Thus, he wanted to hide his pretension from the orthodox *ulema*.

¹⁷⁰. *Ain-i-Akbari*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 229.

¹⁷¹. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 3.

¹⁷². K. A. Nizami, *On History and Historians of Medieval India*, Delhi, p. 1983, p. 143.

¹⁷³. *Akbar Nama*, op. cit, Vol. II, p. 558; *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 198.

An important aspect of Abul Fazl is the contradiction of his logical approach in his presentation of the personality of Akbar. He attaches many miracles with Akbar as he states that when Maryam Makani was pregnant, and Akbar was in her womb, 'A strange light was perceptible from her bright brows'.¹⁷⁴ 'The nurse (of Akbar) felt as if a great light approached her and entered her bosom'.¹⁷⁵ 'His majesty by virtues of his perfect memory recollects his every occurrence in gross and detail; from the time he was one year old, when the material reason (*Aql-i Haiwani*) came into action'.¹⁷⁶

Abul Fazl claims that he saw in his dream a victory of eastern province by Mughal army.¹⁷⁷ He seems to give some supernatural aura to his attachment with Akbar.

Therefore, one may observe the departure of Abul Fazl from rationalism, when he discusses 'Miracles' of Akbar. Through these claims about Akbar he appears to be a builder of characteristic of religious grandeur. Another aspect which is blemish on person like Abul Fazl is flattery. His exaltation of Akbar surpasses all elements. For example, when in 1596, Mughal envoys reached in the court of Shah Abbas of Iran, the narrative of Abul Fazl about the whole episode of travel can be cited as a piece of cheap flattery. He states:

¹⁷⁴. *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., Vol. I, p. 43.

¹⁷⁵. Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁷⁶. Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁷⁷. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 114.

“It was reported that when Zeya-ul-Mulk and Abu Nasir arrived there (Iran), Shah Abbas behaved like dutiful child and made the Shahinshah’s (Akbar’s) slippers-which the ambassadors had with them-the crown of good fortune. He accepted the regulations (*dasturnama*) of the world’s commander and gathered the bless by acting in accordance therewith.”¹⁷⁸

This Fabricated story is a cheap exaltation of emperor by Abul Fazl, which is being at variance with, his logical and rational approach.

¹⁷⁸. *Akbar Nama*, Ibid., Vol. III, p. 745

CHAPTER 5

ORTHODOX SUFIS, ULEMA AND AKBAR

The socio-cultural and religious condition during Akbar's period had been strange for the orthodox *ulema* of the court as well as those who were outside the court circle. A large section of *ulema* and *mashaikh* adopted themselves to this new socio-religious milieu in the court. While a few of them adopted an attitude of indifference towards these new developments, a section of *ulema* and *mashikh* who were uncomfortable with these changes, responded to it. They tried to curb the after-effects of these developments. They attempted to resist it, though their methods of resistance were different.

In this chapter, we will discuss the views of the three critics of Akbar's religious policies. These include Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi, Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddis Dehlvi and Abdul Qadir Badauni. The short life sketches of Shaikh Ahmad and Shaikh Abdul Haq will help in understanding their attitude towards Akbar and his religious policies.

5.1 SHAIKH AHMAD SIRHIND AND RELIGIO-INTELLECTUAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE AKBAR'S COURT

Shaikh Ahmad was born in 1564 (971 AH) at Sirhind.¹ He received early education from his father Shaikh Abdul Ahad and went to Sialkot for further studies. It was here that he studied *Hadis* and other Islamic sciences under Kamal Kashmiri.² After his father's death in 1599, he left home for the pilgrimage. During the course of his journey he reached Delhi and came in the contact of Khwajah Baqi Billah, an eminent saint of *Naqshbandiah* Sufi order.³ It is reported that Shaikh Ahmad acquired knowledge of esoteric sciences under the guidance of Khwajah Baqi Bellah. He was also a great admirer of the abilities of Shaikh Ahmad. According to *Zabdat-ul Maqamat*, Khwajah Baqi Billah was of the view that 'Shaikh Ahmad is the sun whose brilliance steals the light of innumerable stars'.⁴

We are not concerned with Shaikh Ahmad's life and his mystic attainments. We are mainly concerned about his views on socio-religious and

¹. Khwajah Muhammad Hsahim Kashmi, *Zabdat-ul-Maqamat*, Naval Kishore, Kanpur, A.H. 1307, p. 127; Shaikh Burhanuddin Sirhindi, *Hazarat-ul-Quds*, Urdu tr. Dr. Ghulam Mustafa Khan, Delhi, 1991, p. 18.

². *Hazrat-ul-Quds*, op.cit., p. 18.

³. Ibid., p. 20; *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, Naval Kishore, Lucknow, 1877, Vol. I, Letter No. 9, 279.

⁴. *Zabdat-ul-Maqamat*, op.cit., p. 330.

intellectual atmosphere of the period of Akbar, expressed in his letters written during the reign of Jahangir. It is generally believed that, Shaikh Ahmad demonstrated his activism in political circles after the death of Akbar in 1605.

Shaikh Ahmad had contacts with some members of the nobles of the court. Hashm Kashmiri states that Shaikh Ahmad studied *Hadis* under Yaqub Kashmiri⁵, a close friend of Faizi and Abdul Qadir Badauni⁶. Hashim Kashmiri also mentions the acquaintance of Shaikh Ahmad with Abul Fazl. Once Shaikh Ahmad participated in a gathering in Agra just after 1590, where he participated in a debate with Abul Fazl, on philosophy and religion.⁷

The study of the letters of Shaikh Ahmad indicates that he had a fair amount familiarity with religious development of Akbar court. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi wrote 534 letters addressed to different persons. These letters deal with different topics⁸. A considerable number of letters have been written to Mughal officials. Relatively, a very small number of letters deal with the socio-religious developments of Akbar's period. It is quite an astonishing fact that letters dealing with religious innovations of Akbar have been written

⁵. Ibid., pp. 128-129.

⁶. Abdul Qadri Badauni, *Mumtakhut-ut-Tawarikh*, ed. Kabiruddin, Ahmad Ali and Nassau Lees, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1864-69, Vol. III, pp. 143-144.

⁷. *Zabdat-ul-Maqamat*, op.cit., pp. 131-132.

⁸. Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi : An Outline of his Thought and a Study of his Image in the eyes of Posterity*, London, 1971, p. 2.

during the reign of Jahangir. These letters are a very useful source for a religious history of Akbar's period. They were written against the 'anti-Islamic' conditions in Akbar's court, and tackle many issues such as *ulema*, who sought for power and money, anti-sharia act, and religious innovations by Akbar, anti-islamic attitude of intellectuals of Mughal court and higher position enjoyed by *Shias* and *Hindus* in his administration.

The same ideas have been presented by Abdul Qadir Badauni. Now, an analysis of Shaikh Ahmad's view becomes relevant. In a letter to Shaikh Farid, he expressed his opinion about the condition of Islam in Akbar's period. This view, more or less, is a confirmation of the ideas of Badauni. In this letter he states:

"The King is to the mankind what heart to the body is. If the heart is healthy the body is also healthy. In like manner reform of the world depends upon the reform of king and his unhealthiness of the world. You know that what calamity had passed on Muslims in the past age (Quran) when the Islam was helpless. In the early years of Islam, when Muslims were few, the calamity on them was not so much like this. Muslims followed their religion and non-Muslims their. But in the near past non-Muslims have obtained supremacy, used to issue orders of heresy in the land of Islam, but Muslim could no dare to issue the orders of Islam, and

if they did, they were put to death what a pity it was that the testifiers of beloved of God, holy Prophet were down trodden and insulted whereas those who disbelieved him were honoured. The Muslims mourned with wounded hearts on the decay of Islam and their enemies' sprinkled salt on their wounds with ridicules and sarcasm. The sun of guidance and the light of truth were covered by the veils of falsehood".⁹

However, this letter traces the religious conditions of Akbar's period, because 'past age' (*Quran*) might have been used for the period of the Akbar. It appears that this letter might have been written at the time of accession of Jahangir, because in the same letter he writes:

"the news of feel of hindrance to the religion of Islam and the accession of the throne of a King of Islam having reached to ears of all Muslim"¹⁰ Mujaddid's many other letters, written to Mughal nobles, echo same condition of Islam in the region of Akbar for example in a letter he says "the greatest of all virtues is to strive for enforcement of *Shariat*, and revive any of its

⁹. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, op.cit., Letter No. 47.

¹⁰. Ibid.

commands, specially in present age when the signs of Islam have been completely effected”.¹¹

In a number of other letters written to nobles by *Mujaddid* describes the pitiable condition of Islam and its *Shariyat* during Akbar’s reign.¹²

Shaikh Ahmad also held *ulema* responsible for the decline of Islam during Akbar’s reign. In a letter to Mulla Haji Muhammad Lahori, Shaikh Ahmad held them responsible for most the evils of the age. He said:

“to the *ulema* the love of the world and inclination towards it is an ugly scar on the face of beauty....these *ulema* who are in clutches of this calamity and prisoners of the wretches’ of this world and are wordly and bad. They are worse than the ordinary man and are thieves of religioninfact whatever slackness and negligence in the command of law and mischiefs in enforcement of the faith have appeared in this age are due to the these bad *ulema*”.¹³

The differences among the *ulema* over religious issues created doubts in Akbar’s mind.¹⁴ Shaikh Ahmad comments about differences among the *ulema* and its effect on society. He states in a letter:

¹¹. Ibid., Letter No. 48.

¹². *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, op.cit., Letter Nos. 53, 65, 194, 195.

¹³. Ibid. Letter No. 33.

¹⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 208-9.

“what ever calamity befalls on Islam in the past was all due to the misfortune of this group (wordly *ulema*). It was they who misled the emperor. The seventy two sects who have fallowed the path of misguidance are led by those leaders and guides”.¹⁵

Sirhindi was so afraid from the nasty differences between *ulema* of Akbar’s court, that when he received the news that Jahangir had ordered Nawab Farid to select four saintly *ulema*, to be employed in the court,¹⁶ expressed his apprehensions to Nawab Farid as follows:

“there are very few religious *ulema*, who have no desire or rank and position. If there is desire every *Alim* would try to pull towards himself and would try to prove his superiority...and they will differ with each other on religious issues.....It would be better to single *Alim* for this purpose....the best of the *ulema* is better than all the man kind and the worst of them is worst than rest of the human being”.¹⁷

¹⁵. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, Ibid., Letter No. 47.

¹⁶. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, op.cit., Letter No. 53; But Athar Abbas Rizvi mentions that no such order by Jahangeer is traceable, in any other contemporary source. Only letter of Shaikh Ahmad gives reference of this order by Jahangeer. S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, Agra, 1965, p. 226.

¹⁷. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, Ibid., Letter No. 53.

These observations of Shaikh Ahmad about the *ulema* leave no doubt that in his view *ulema* was not only responsible for their own destruction, but also creating doubt in Akbar's mind leading to his alienation from orthodox Islam.

Other developments in the court which had not been in accordance with Islamic doctrine were also criticized by Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi. In 1579 Akbar was declared *Sultan-i-Adil*, a position superior to that *Mujtahid* (interpreter of religious law)¹⁸. Many other religious innovations were also introduced.¹⁹ As a consequence, now Akbar was free to select any opinion from the different views on any religious topic. In other words, he was given the power to *ijtihad* (interpretation). Shaikh Ahmad also condemns this practice of *ijtihad*, adopted by Akbar. He states:

“the last Prophet has explicitly stated that whoever introduces something new which was not originally a part of our religion, it shall be rejected”²⁰.

In a letter written to Mir Muhammad Noman, Shaikh Ahmad also strongly opposed prostration (Sajda) before emperor.²¹

¹⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 270-272.

¹⁹. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, ed. Agha Ahmad Ali and Abdur Rahim, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1873-77, Vol. III, p. 270.

²⁰. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, op.cit., Letter No. 186.

The arrival of *Nuqtavis* and other Iranian scholars brought such type of philosophical discussions at the court, which were new to the Mughal court. Reason and logic have been used instead of conventional following of the religion. These free thinking philosophers played a great role in subduing the position of the *ulema*. In addition to this the position of Prophet was also undermined under the influence of the Iranian free thinkers and Abul Fazl. According to Badauni when Azam Khan returned from Bengal and presented himself before Akbar, the emperor said, ‘we found proofs for part of reality of metempsychosis and Abul Fazl will convince you of it’.²² The Day of Judgment and resurrection of human beings were doubted.²³ Badauni states ‘in the presence of emperor no one dared to mention the name of Prophet’²⁴

Badauni’s writing manifests the indications that position of Prophet was undermined under the influence of free thinking philosophers. And it is perhaps in this regard that Abul Fazl gives the term *Kaysh-i-Ahmadi* (the sect of Muhammad)²⁵ instead of Islam.

²¹. Ibid, Vol. II, Letter No. 92.

²². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 300.

²³. Ibid., p. 307.

²⁴. Ibid.

²⁵. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. Sir Syed Ahmad, Sir Syed Academy Aligarh, reprint 2005, Vol. I, p. 223.

The letters of Shaikh Ahmad reveal a lot about his ideas in the matter.

He explains:

“These (Philosophers) look to penance and prayer following the lead of illuminists and rejected the teachings of the Prophet. They relied on the purification of self and fanciful ecstatic experiences. They went astray and seduced others”.²⁶

In a letter to Khwajah Ibrahim Qabayadyani he writes:

“The Philosophers had devoted their whole lives to mastering the principles of logic or correct use of reasoning so as to save themselves from committing mistakes. They took great pains in learning these principles but the moment they started applying their mind to the nature and to attributes of ultimate reality they gave up the science of reasoning, and began beating about the bush...Now it is open to every one to have faith in the Prophets and became a believer and one of those who join the company of philosophers, accursed and condemned”.²⁷

Akbar's religious tolerance and his inclination towards Hindus, and the emperor's interest in the manner of worshipping the idols of Rama and

²⁶. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. Letter No. 34.

²⁷. *Ibid.*, Letter No. 23.

Krishna²⁸ were also denounced by Shaikh Ahmad in a letter written to Hirday Ram, a Hindu by faith, he writes:

“Rama and Krishna and others like them, the Gods of Hindus are amongst the meanest of His (God’s) creations.....when Rama could not protect even his wife, how can he help others. Exert your brain making to best use of it, and do not worship them”.²⁹

Sirhindi’s hatred for non-muslims is evident from his letter written to Shaikh Farid³⁰. The letter reveals his rejoicing on the execution of Guru Arjan.³¹ In several letters of Sirhindi written in the early phase of Jahangir he emphatically suggested that infidels must be kept in disgrace, and must be treated like untouchables.³²

But his letter number twenty two of volume third is a contradiction of his ideas for non-Muslims. In that letter Sirhindi discusses the question whether contacts between Muslims and infidels are permissible. He refers to a Hadis, according to which Prophet had meal with Jews. He quotes a verse of Quran which declares that food of ‘people of the book’ was lawful for muslims. For

²⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 258-259.

²⁹. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, op.cit., Vol. I, Letter No. 167.

³⁰. According to Yahanan Friedmann it was written in 1606. *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhind*, op.cit., p. 73.

³¹. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, Ibid., Vol. I, Letter No. 193.

³². Ibid., Letter Nos. 163, 165, 193.

him the impurity of polytheists indicates the impurity of their faith only. Thus Sirhindi, reaches the conclusion that contacts with polytheists had never been forbidden and that in the condition of India, they are inevitable.³³ This contradiction between the thoughts of Sirhindi for polytheists or infidels is due to his softened attitude, developed in the later period. The above mentioned letter had been written after a considerable time had elapsed since the death of Akbar. Therefore, his fury for non-muslims might have calmed down by then.

It is not easy to understand Sirhindi's influence on the Mughal court and culture. The accounts written by disciples of *Naqshbandiyah* order such as *Hazrat ul Quds*, *Zabdat ul Maqamat*, and *Rauzal ul Qayyamiyah*, assert that he played the role of a champion of Islam who drove back the stream of religious innovations of Akbar and established at least a semi-Islamic state under Jahengeer who according to *Naqshbandiyah* sources had come under the influence of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi.

Several modern scholars are also in favour of large-than-life heroic image of Sirhindi, projected by *Naqshbandiyah* disciples. These modern scholars are, Ishtiyak Husain Qureshi, Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, Shaikh Ikram and Aziz Ahmad. But few other modern scholars, who are not convinced with these *Naqshbandi* eulogies of Sirhindi, are Athar Abbas Rizvi and Irfan Habib.

³³. Ibid., Vol. III, Letter No. 22.

Our present effort is not concerned with the debate on Sirhindi's 'heroic' efforts. However, it must be indicated here that the letters written to different nobles showed his apprehensions about the downfall of the Islam, caused by circumstances developed in the reign of Akbar.

Irfan Habib is of the opinion that the view that Sirhindi's correspondence with Mughal nobles was unilateral, and there are no historical evidences suggesting any importance of Sirhindi's letters addressed to the royal nobles. Adding to that 'there is no proof that Shaikh Farid ever took Shaikh Ahmad' advice³⁴, he further says, 'it seems very difficult to believe that such a high official of the empire would have dared to entertain letters which spoke in abusive term of the reigning King's father'³⁵

Ather Abbas Rizvi too believes that letters of Sirhindi did not influence the nobles of eminence and neither Sirhindi could create any desired impact on them.³⁶ This idea of the historians that Sirhindi's correspondence with Mughal nobles was unilateral and Sirhindi did not receive any response from the other side, is perhaps not correct. Indeed, we do not find information from other sources that what response Sirhindi could get from the Mughal officials. But

³⁴. Irfan Habib, "The Political role of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah", *PIHC*, 1960, p. 212.

³⁵. Ibid.

³⁶. See for example S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, Agra, 1965, p. 244.

careful study of letters of Shaikh Ahmad, gives some indications of mutual correspondence between Mughal nobles and him. In our ongoing discussion we would examine the relation of Shaikh Ahmad with Shaikh Fared and Abdur Rahim Khan.

In the letter number forty four written to Shaikh Farid, Sirhindi states 'your letter came to me in very suitable time'.³⁷ Another example of correspondence between Shaikh Ahmad and Shaikh Farid, is the letter number forty five of same volume. Here, Sirhindi remarked, 'I received a treatise sent by you (Shaikh Farid) in the month of Ramzan'.³⁸ So, the argument that Shaikh Ahmad's correspondence was unilateral is not true. Another important objection is that the Mughal nobles could not dare to entertain such a letter which contained abusive language for the father of reigning king (Jahangeer). But Shaikh Fared was not fearful in maintaining the relations with Shaikh Ahmad, because Shaikh Ahmad states to Shaikh Farid 'I received your stipend (Inayat Nama)'.³⁹ This letter indicates that Sirhinds was receiving something in kind or cash from Shaikh Farid. Hence, it is clear that Shaikh Ahmad was getting regular responses from Shaikh Farid for his letters.

³⁷. *Maktubat Imam Rabbani*, Ibid., Vol. I, Letter No. 44.

³⁸. Ibid., Vol. I, Letter No. 45.

³⁹. Ibid.

Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, also replied to the letters of Shaikh Ahmad to him. In the letter number sixty eight, Shiakh Ahmad mentioned three letters of Khan-i-Khanan which he received, from him. This letter of the Shaikh also reveals a very close personal relationship between Khan-i-Khanan and Shaikh Ahmad. In this letter Shaikh Ahmad gave some advices to Khan-i-Khanan regarding religious matters. Language of Shaikh Ahmad, gives an impression that Sirhindi was like a mentor to Khan-i-Khanan.

Inspite of these evidences we are not sure about the magnitude of influence of Sirhindi on Mughal court. The central problem in this context is the availability of historical sources. We can not blindly rely on *Naqshbandiyah* writings, because these are all written in eulogizing pattern. Yohanan Friedmann perceives this situation very well, and adopts a very balance attitude on this matter and suggests the reader that:

“It is evident from existence of these letters, that Sirhindi tried to impress his view of Islam upon some of top officials of the Mughal empire. Unfortunately, we do not have at our disposal. The answers given to Sirhindi by these officialsthe questions of Sirhindi’s influence upon the thinking Shaikh Fared Bokhari Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan should have become a matter of controversy among the student of his works is regrettable; any opinion concerning the matter remains in the realm of speculation

until....the letters of these officials to Sirhindi is brought to light and analysis.”⁴⁰

Even before Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, Abdul Qadir Badauni and Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi, have produced such work, which showed their conviction to defend their faith from the cultural and religious innovation of Akbar and philosophical and intellectual attacks of his allies on conventional Islam. Abul Haq Muhaddis adopted a way to defend Islam, but was in moderate manner. Badauni tried to spread his religious ideas but in concealment. His *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* came in light after his death, his *Najat ur Rashid* was kept secret, or its circulation was restricted to few persons. But Shaikh Ahmad's approach was more vocal and bold. Shaikh Ahmad's approach needs more analysis and explanation in broader canvas, because it can be more important source than its present historical value.

5.2 SHAIKH ABDUL HUQ MUHADDIS DEHLVI AND ATMOSPHERE OF AKBAR'S COURT

Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi was born in 1551.⁴¹ His early education began under his father Shaikh Saifuddin.⁴² Since his childhood he was so fond

⁴⁰. Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi : An Outline of his Thought and a Study of his Image in the eyes of Posterity*, op.cit., p. 81.

⁴¹. Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi, *Akhbar ul Akhyar fi Asrar-ul Abrar*, Matba-i Mujtabai, Delhi, A.H. 1332, p. 310.

of studies, that he used to reach his *Madarasa*, even before sunrise while it was situated far away from his house.⁴³ Once, his hair caught fire from a lamp while he was busy in reading at night.⁴⁴ Very soon his quest for knowledge, familiarized with Arabic language, Quran and logic.

In his youth he came in the contact of spiritual men of his time. He mentions the name of Shaikh Ishaq of Suharwardi order whose spiritual qualities inspired him very much.⁴⁵ After the completion of his formal education, he adopted the profession of teaching.⁴⁶ Later, Shaikh Abdul Haq shifted to Fatehpur Sikri, and came in the contact of Nizamuddin Ahmad Bakshi, and Faizi.⁴⁷ After spending some time in Sikri he decided to go for pilgrimage. It seems that the atmosphere of court was not congenial for him. Badauni states:

“when change came over the spirit of the time and the men all of whom are corrupters... and it was no longer safe to trust the

⁴². Ibid., p. 311.

⁴³. Ibid.

⁴⁴. Ibid.

⁴⁵. Ibid., p. 312.

⁴⁶. Abdul Hamid Lahore, *Badshah Nama*, ed. Kabir Al-Din Ahmad, Abd Al-Rahim and W.N.Lees, Bid. Ind., Vol. II, pp. 241-242; See also K. A. Nizami, *Hayat Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi*, Delhi, 1953, p. 90.

⁴⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 113.

dispositions of one's friend, and companionship of such a cone⁴⁸ became disagreeable to whom, and the grace of God influencing him, he (Abdul Huq) impelled to journey to the most noble kabah".⁴⁹

Thus, changing religious atmosphere of the court obliged him to leave it. He did not proceed for Mekkah immediately but lived in Delhi for few years. In 1586 he left India for Hejaz and when he reached Gujarat, Nizamuddin Ahmad welcomed him. Shaikh lived with him for few months. However Nizamuddin Ahmad managed his journey to Hejaz.⁵⁰ In Mekkah he came in contact with Shaikh Abdul Wahab Muttaqi⁵¹, an Indian Shaikh who had settled in Hejaz.

Under the guidance of Shaikh Abdul Wahab and other scholars of Mekkah, he studied famous book of traditions i.e., *Sahih Bukhari*, *Shahih Muslem* and *Mishakat*.⁵² Shaikh Abdul Wahab Muttaqi gave instructions to Shakh Abdul Huq in sufi practices of Qadriya, Shazilea, Madinia Sufi orders.⁵³

⁴⁸. According to W. Haig, here Badauni avoiding the name of Abul Fazl and Faizi. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, tr. by W. Haig, Patna, reprint, 1973, p. 168, f.n. 1.

⁴⁹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., pp. 113-114.

⁵⁰. *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, MS., Tashkent, fol. 323 a; also see for S. A. A. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, New Delhi, 1983, Vol. II, p. 84.

⁵¹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 114-115.

⁵². *Zad-ul-Muttaqin*, MSS., Raza Library Rampur, ff. 49b-50a; See for example S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, op.cit., p. 158.

Shaikh Abdul Huq was not interested in returning back to India, but his mentor Abdul Wahab Muttaqi convinced him to do so. It appears that Shaikh Abdul Wahab Muttaqi, induced in his ideas the superiority of *shariat* over innovative sufi practices. This can be construed from the fact that he told Shaikh Abdul Huq that the most sacred duty of Muslims was to strengthen their beliefs with-in the framework of *shariat*, and then to study dispassionately the sufi works.⁵⁴ He departed from Hejaz and finally reached India in 1592.⁵⁵ Once he was back to home he came in contact of Khwajah Baqi Billah, an eminent saint of *Naqshbandiya* order.⁵⁶

Abdul Huq considered those people who were not familiar with ordinances of shara and have not even heard of traditions and aphorisms of *ulema*, as illiterate and to be educated and brought home the truth.⁵⁷ And to those people who maintained that, they had nothing to do with *Shariat*, and

⁵³. *Makatib wa'r Rasael*, p. 3; see also K. A. Nizami, *Hayat Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi*, op.cit., p. 109.

⁵⁴. S. A. A. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, Ibid., p. 86; K. A. Nizami, *Hayat Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi*, op.cit., p. 123.

⁵⁵. S. A. A. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, Ibid., p. 86.

⁵⁶. *Kalimat-i-Taiyabat*, ff. 16b-17a; see also S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, op.cit., p. 158.

⁵⁷. *Makatib-wa'r Rasail*, p. 72; also see S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, Ibid., p. 160.

hold on to the skirt of almighty while attaching no importance to others, he considered them kafirs.⁵⁸

After his arrival in Delhi he established a *madarasa*. and started teaching according to new curriculum. Hadis and Quran were specially emphasized rather than other topics. It appears that he was not in a position to counter religious experiments of Akbar, so he adopted a moderate approach. Mir Abdul Awwal a contemporary of Shaikh Abdul Huq states that, he spread knowledge of *Hadis* to prevent tumults of the time.⁵⁹

Shaikh Abdul Huq had been in the court before departing for Hejaz but after his return the religious atmosphere of the court was not as suitable as it was earlier for a person like Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi. Abdul Awwal's in a letter to Shaikh Dehlvi writes:

“if a person serves the Royal court and wastes his time in eulogizing the monarch, his religious qualities departs him.”⁶⁰

He was in acute close to Faizi before his visit to Mecca, therefore, when Faizi returned from Deccan in 1593, came to know his return he sent several

⁵⁸. *Makatib-wa'r Rasail*, p. 73; also see S. A. A. Rizvi, *Muslim Revivalist Movements in the Northern India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, Ibid., p. 160.

⁵⁹. K. A. Nizami, *Hayat Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi*, op.cit., p. 297.

⁶⁰. *Makatib wa'r Rasail*, op.cit., p.73, see also K. A. Nizami, *Hayat Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi*, op.cit., p. 145.

letters. Shaikh sent replies to his letters but avoided meeting him. In this connection Badauni writes:

“Shakh Faizi after his return from Deccan, following his old customs of ingeniously tormenting his friends, was very desirous of gathering them round him in order to increase the attractions of social circle and to indulge in conversation with them and was constantly annoying and troubling them (to come to him)”.⁶¹

Although he did not object openly the religious policies of Akbar, but through his writings it appears that he was not happy with religious and cultural development in the court. Badauni states:

“since in his Majesty’s opinion, it was settled fact, that the one thousand years since the time of mission of Prophet, which was to be the period of continuance of faith of Islam were now completed, no hindrance remained to the promulgation of those secret design which he nursed in his heart”.⁶²

He had completely devoted his life for the revival of shirat or sunna and considered joining the company of people like Faizi or visit to imperial court as a hindrance to his cause.

⁶¹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 115.

⁶². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 301.

He refuted the philosopher and intellectuals of Akbar's court who challenged miracles attributed to the Prophet Muhammad by giving detailed explanation of their nature and the mission of the Prophet.⁶³

He criticized Akbar for adopting Hindu practices when he writes:

“any one would adopt the custom of infidels, he would by among them, like wearing zunnar, and prostration before idols or living being”.⁶⁴

After coming back from *Haj*, he established cordial relations with some of the important nobles of Mughal court such as Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan and Shaikh Farid Bukhari and also wrote letters to them by emphasizing the need of fostering the *shariat* and strengthening the cause of *sunnat*. He also compiled several book on *Hadis*, and *Fiqh*, and on the life.

The foremost aim of all his works was to propagate the superiority of *shariat* and *sunnat*, and highlight the importance of Prophet Muhammad and his mission in the every home of the Muslims. To restore Islam to its purity had been his foremost concern. His objective was hardly different from that of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi albeit they differed in their approaches. Shaikh Ahmad

⁶³. S. A. A. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, op.cit., p. 89.

⁶⁴. *Ashat-ul-Lumat*, Vol. I, p. 4; also see K. A. Nizami, *Hayat Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi*, op.cit., p. 301.

was aggressive in presenting his thoughts while Shaikh Abdul Huq Muhaddis followed a very polite and persuasive and psychological approach.

5.3 ABDUL QADER BADAUNI AND ATMOSPHERE OF AKBAR'S COURT

Abdul Qadir Badauni joined Akbar's court in 1573.⁶⁵ He witnessed various developments in the court of Akbar during his stay over there. Accordingly, he mentions those events in his book, *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*. There is also some information regarding the new developments at the court which he wrote was based on the testimonies of other courtiers as he was not an eye-witness of those events.

Interestingly, Badauni in the beginning of his work presents Akbar as a religious and kind hearted monarch having great reverence for *ulemas* and Sufi saints.

Akbar showed his kindness even towards rebels when they approached him and begged for forgiveness. Badauni writes Qiya Khan going leading the *Uzbecks* came to court,

“the Emperor on his (Qiya Khan) arrival granted an audience and graciously condoned his offences”.⁶⁶

⁶⁵. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 172.

⁶⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 75-76.

“Emperor did not wish to put him to death... and when he (Bahadur Khan Uzbek) asked for water, emperor gave him some out of his own canteen”.⁶⁷

Similarly after the suppression of the rebellion when Muhammad Husain Mirza, was arrested and presented before the Emperor:

“He (Akbar) with his usual kindness and good nature contended himself with reprimanding and delivered him over to the charge of Rai Singh”.⁶⁸

In a way he showed mercy to Hemu when he remarked:

“why should I strike him now, that he is already as good as dead. If sensation and activity were left in him, I would do so”.⁶⁹

Akbar was also extremely respectful towards *Ulema* and *Sufis* of his empire.⁷⁰ He had a very special place in his heart for Shaikh Moinuddin Chishti and his *dargah* at Ajmer. Badauni narrates one such pilgrimage of Akbar to Ajmer:

⁶⁷. Ibid., p. 97.

⁶⁸. Ibid., p. 169.

⁶⁹. Ibid., p. 16.

⁷⁰. Ibid., p. 105.

“and by way of performing a vow the emperor walked the whole way on foot... and he arrived at Ajmer. There he paid visit to the holy mausoleum of blessed bestower of blessing, the saint Khwajah Moinuddin Chishti and having occupied himself in Alms and good and pious works”.⁷¹

In Delhi an attempt was made on Akbar's life. But the wound was not life threatening, and physician could manage to cure him. Badauni did not hide the attitude of Akbar for this miraculous escape that he was saved by spiritual help of Saints of Delhi.⁷² Badauni informs about several meetings of Akbar with Muslim saints. In any reference of this Badauni did not attempt to distort, Akbar's feeling of reverence for saints. Apart from this, he also projects Akbar as a person who had inclination towards Sufi tendencies. Badauni records that Akbar sat alone in a meditating and thought full mood, and tried to imitate the example of Sulaiman Kararani.⁷³ Badauni also admires Akbar for his interest in *Hadis* and Prophet. He says “His majesty had thus leisure to come into nearer

⁷¹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 105.

⁷². Ibid., p. 62.

⁷³. Ibid., p. 200; Sulaiman Kararani was ruler of Bengal. He also had inclination for *sufi* tendencies.

contact with ascetics and Miun⁷⁴ and passed much of his time in discussing the words of God (*Quran*) and words of Prophet (*Hadis*).⁷⁵

In the light of the information presented by Badauni, Akbar appears as a man of religious inclination who was respectful towards *ulema* and *Mashaikh* and regular in observing Islamic practices. However the situation changed after 1579 but before that the establishment of *Ibadat Khana*, significant developments started taking place in Akbar's religious attitude or policies. In the discussions Abul Fazl, Badauni and a number of Iranian blasted orthodoxy with the tacit approval of the Emperor. The orthodox *ulema* due to their rigidity of views, arrogance and differences among themselves failed to effectively counter the arguments of Abul Fazl and his associates.⁷⁶ Besides Abul Fazl, Badauni accuses Geelani for every change in the religious learning of the emperor.⁷⁷ Badauni considers Abul Fazl, Mulla Muhammad Yazd and Birbal as the main culprits in deviating Akbar from Islam. Badauni states:

“Mulla Muhammad Yazd who got the name of yazidi...commenced openly to revile the companion of Prophet....tried hard to make him (Akbar) Shia. But he was left behind by Birbal....and by Shaikh Abul Fazl and Hakim Abul

⁷⁴. Sheikh Moinuddin Chishti of Ajmer.

⁷⁵. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p. 200.

⁷⁶. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p. 251.

⁷⁷. Ibid., p. 211.

Fath who successfully turned Akbar from Islam and led him to reject inspiration. Prophetship and miracles of the Prophet and of saints and even the whole *Shariat*".⁷⁸

Badauni began writing *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* in 1591,⁷⁹ and by then Akbar's religious beliefs and his overall attitude towards Islam and other religions completely changed. But from a study of *Muntakhab* we can see the developments that lead to these changes. Now we come to the critical approach of Badauni for Akbar. In the *Najat-ur Rashid*'s Badauni deplores the atmosphere of Mughal court without referring the name of Akbar or any of his close associate.

In *Muntakhab*, Badauni mentions that Akbar was persuaded by his Hindu courtiers to worship sun and cow and to adopt sacred thread (*Zunnar*) and sectarian mark on his forehead.⁸⁰ In *Najat* too these practices are criticized but names are mentioned. Badauni simply writes, 'adoration of sun is a polytheistic act (Shirk)'⁸¹ and 'tying the sacred thread (*Zunnar*), putting their special mark on the forehead is symbolic of infidelity'.⁸² Similarly in *Muntakhab*, Badauni laments that Akbar's belief in Quran was weak and he did

⁷⁸. Ibid.

⁷⁹. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 5.

⁸⁰. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 261-62.

⁸¹. Abdul Qader Badauni, *Najat-ur-Rashid*, ed. Moinul Huq, Idarah-i-Tahqiqat, Pakistan, Lahore, 1972, p. 44.

⁸². Ibid., p. 49.

not believe in angels.⁸³ In the *Najat* the same feeling is expressed in ardent manner. Here he mentions: 'Disputing the Quran and ridiculing it means lack of faith in the Prophet and is infidelity'⁸⁴ and 'Antagonisms towards angels attributing improper attitudes to them, to say that they are (created) of matter or to say like the Indian Brahmanas, that they eat, drink, and procreate in infidelity'.⁸⁵ Likewise without making any reference to *mahzar* of 1579, *Najat* regretted its basic contention by clearly pointing out that 'everyone who steps beyond the path of *Shariat* and the religion and interprets the laws of *Shariat* to suit his own lustful ambitions is heretic'⁸⁶. According to him Akbar was so influenced by the Hindu faith that he appointed a *Brahman* namely Purshattam, to create name of all things existed in the Universe in Sanskrit⁸⁷ and under the influence of Hinduism he began to give importance to the philosophy of transmigration.⁸⁸

According to Badauni in 1579, the principle teacher of Zoroastrians came to the court. They impressed Akbar by their religious philosophy. Their rituals especially fire worship impressed Akbar. He gave order to lit fire in the palace in accordance with the ritual of Zoroastrianism. Abul Fazl was given the

⁸³. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., Vol. II, p. 273.

⁸⁴. *Najat-ur-Rashid*, Ibid., p. 35.

⁸⁵. Ibid.

⁸⁶. Ibid., pp. 62-63.

⁸⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ibid., p. 257.

⁸⁸. Ibid., p. 258.

responsibility to look after it and ensure that it was never extinguished.⁸⁹

Another important blame put by Badauni is that ‘resurrection and judgment other details and its traditions of which the Prophet was repository, he (Akbar) laid all aside and he made his courtiers continually listen to those reviling and attacks against our pure and easy, bright and holy faith’.⁹⁰

Badauni also suggests that, Akbar’s curious nature proved harmful for his faith. In the light of Badauni’s writings it seems that Akbar had quest for knowledge and as a result of this many learned persons from different places and pious people from different religions and sects came to the court. The court of Akbar was an amalgamation of different ideologies and different issues had been brought in discussion. Akbar was not learned enough that he could understand the essential complexities of discourses, dealt with philosophy and religion. Badauni states about the attitude of Akbar for these complex discussions, that ‘Akbar chose every thing (from discussions) that pleased him, and discarded every thing that was against his disposition.’⁹¹ Badauni puts forward his idea that gradually the situation turned so much dangerous for Islam that, it was about to extend because the emperor was secretly planning for it. He states that ‘when first millennium of Islamic era was to be completed, no hindrance remained to promulgation of those secret designs which he nursed in

⁸⁹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 261.

⁹⁰. *Ibid.*, p. 257.

⁹¹. *Ibid.*, p. 256.

his heart'⁹² and he further writes 'Akbar fearlessly embarked on his design of establishing his own cherished pernicious beliefs.'⁹³ In his *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, he gives details of the orders issued by Akbar, which were against religion. According to Badauni Akbar proclaimed that as the dead person would derive no pleasure from the feast, given after his death, as a ceremony, therefore, emperor suggested that people should offer feasts on their birthday, and it was termed as Ash-i-Hayat (Food of life).⁹⁴ A called *Shaitapura* was set up out side of city and for the prostitutes.⁹⁵ The flesh of tiger and boar which is not permitted in Islam was allowed.⁹⁶ Badauni accused Akbar that the forbidden *namaz*, fast and pilgrimage was forbidden. Even the Islamic practices were reviled through writing of treatise against it.⁹⁷ He further informs that to disgrace Islam, pigs and dogs which are *haram* (prohibited) in Islam were kept in the palace, and many persons took dogs to the table and ate with them which were also prohibited.⁹⁸ He put blame on Emperor that names like Ahmad and Muhammad, Mustafa and various names of Prophet and God had become

⁹². *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 301.

⁹³. Ibid.

⁹⁴. Ibid., p. 306.

⁹⁵. Ibid., p. 302.

⁹⁶. Ibid., p. 306.

⁹⁷. Ibid.

⁹⁸. Ibid., p. 305; According to Athar Abbas Rizvi, here Badauni is referring Qasim Kahi and Faizi, S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign*, New Delhi, 1975, p. 449.

offensive to the emperor and to utter them, was a crime.⁹⁹ Even mosques and prayer rooms were transformed into store room and in Hindu guard rooms.¹⁰⁰

Besides Badauni, other contemporary and near contemporary authors also mention such situations, cultural and religious conditions which provide support to the views of Badauni. Jesuit mission who arrived at the court of Akbar also emphasized that Akbar was departing from Islam. Father de Jurrice states 'In the town of Lahore, there is not a single mosque remained for the use of Saracans (Muslims) for those, which were formerly there have been, by his orders turned into stables or into public granaries'.¹⁰¹ It is a well known fact that the writings of Abul Fazl also create an impression that the court atmosphere, and ideas of Akbar were not in accordance with Islam. Many time he refers to Islam as *Kesh-i Ahmadi* (sect of Ahmad). In the *Ain*, while referring the Islamic law of inheritance states, "In the *Kesh-i-Ahmadi*, the daughter receives a smaller share in the inheritance, although it is better that a weaker should be received the larger share'.¹⁰² Abul Fazl not only presented Islam as sect of Prophet, but also, but also criticized the law of inheritance in Islam. Another author of Jahangir's period, Niamatullah, gave such information which depicts

⁹⁹. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 314.

¹⁰⁰. Ibid.

¹⁰¹. Father Pierre Du Jarric, *Akbar and Jesuit*, tr. by C.H. Payne, New Delhi, Reprint 1979, p. 67.

¹⁰². Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, ed. Blochmann, Bib Ind., Calcutta, 1877, Vol. II, p. 235.

almost, same religious condition of Akbar's period. He states "the Prophet's *Shariat* which like red-flower withered by the autumn wind, blossomed afresh with the accession of king of the Islam (Jahangir)".¹⁰³

Therefore it has been proved that the views of Badauni about Akbar's deviation from Islam hold its ground. But there are also some references which suggest that Badauni's accusation of Akbar was an exaggeration, specially, in the case of *namaz* and *haj*, the most importantly Islamic practices were forbidden by Akbar. Badauni himself mentions in his *Muntakhab* about performing the *namaz* by Fatehullah Shirazi in the state hall.¹⁰⁴ Shaikh Arif Husaini also recited *azan* and performed *namaz* at the Imperial court.¹⁰⁵ Christian missionaries who generally intended to prove that Mughal ruler almost lost his faith in his ancestral religion, Monserrate mentions that on his mission to Kabul, in 1586, gave order to set apart a tent for *namaz*.¹⁰⁶ Thus mosque continued to be built during Akbar's last years for *namaz*. The most outstanding example is an exceptionally large mosque built by Man Singh at Raj Mohan in Bengal. The local tradition presents a curious picture of Akbar as

¹⁰³. Khwajah Niamatullah, *Tarikh-i Khan-i Jahan*, ed. Saiyid Muhammad Imamuddin, Dacca, 1960, Vol. I, p. 668.

¹⁰⁴. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 315-16.

¹⁰⁵. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 59.

¹⁰⁶. Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate*, tr. by J.S. Hayland and annotated by S.N. Banerjee, Oxford University Press, Calcutta, p. 1922, p. 155.

an orthodox Muslim sovereign. The Archaeological Survey reports that the mosque ‘was originally intended for a temple, but was afterwards turned into the Jama Masjid for fear of the emperor.’¹⁰⁷

Badauni claims that *haj* was forbidden. Recalling the imperial order issued in 1576, which permitted Muslims to go on pilgrimage at state expenses, Badauni laments ‘But the reverse is now the case, for he (Akbar) cannot bear even the name of such thing (*haj*) and merely to ask leave to go on a pilgrimage is enough to make a man a malefactor of death’.¹⁰⁸ In 1580, Hakim-ul Mulk was sent to Mecca, as last Amir *haj* with gifts to Sharif of Mecca and plenty of money to distribute as alms in the cities of Mecca and Madina.¹⁰⁹ It was the last government sponsored voyage to Hejaz. But it does not mean that pilgrimage was halted by the emperor as suggested by Badauni. There were other reasons responsible for the suspension of pilgrimage.

Apart from, these ideas of Akbar regarding *haj* as presented by Badauni, one should see this break of relation from Hejaz with a different point of view.

¹⁰⁷. List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, revised and corrected upto August 198, issued by Government of Bengal: Public Works Department, Calcutta, 1896, pp. 460-61; also see Athar Ali, “Sulhkul and Religious Ideas of Akbar”, *Mughal India, Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society and Culture*, ed. Irfan Habib, New Delhi, 2006, p. 167.

¹⁰⁸. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 239.

¹⁰⁹. *Ibid.*, pp. 275, 285.

Ottoman documents throw a new light on this issue. According to Ottoman sources, activities of Indians in Hejaz under which the suzerainty of Ottoman Turks caused antagonism between Mughals and Ottomans. It appears that ladies of Mughal household, their numerous attendants, as well as a multitude of people, who had gone on pilgrimage, with Mughal *haj* caravan, had overstayed there. This caused overcrowding and scarcity of basic provisions. Therefore Indians had become a source of trouble for local natives.¹¹⁰ They were also reported to be freely involved in such type of activity which was against *Shariat*.¹¹¹

In response Ottoman Sultan Murad III, ordered Sharif of Mecca and other authorities to restrain Indians including ladies of Mughal household from staying in the holy city after performing *haj* and to arrange their immediate return to the India. The authorities in Hejaz were also directed to curb the anti-

¹¹⁰. *Muhimme Dafterleri*, 35, p. 292. *Farman* No. 740, 27, *Rajab*, 986 H. (September 29, 1578), Cf. Naimur Rehman Farooqi, *Mughal Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relation between Mughal India and Ottoman Empire (1556-1748)*, Delhi, 1989, p. 118.

¹¹¹. *Muhimme Dafterleri*, 39, p. 160, *Farman* No. 349, 25, *Zelhaj*, 987 H. (February 13, 1580), Cf. Naimur Rehman Farooqi, *Mughal Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relation between Mughal India and Ottoman Empire (1556-1748)*, Ibid.

shariat activities by the Indians in the vicinity of *Haram*.¹¹² In the response of the order by the Ottoman Sultan, Mughal royal ladies had to leave Hejaz later on these ladies were also insulted by the governor of Aden, on their way back to India.¹¹³ Ottoman Sultan also ordered Sharif of Macca, to stop the distribution of Alms by Akbar.¹¹⁴ Naim ur Rehman Faruqi, a modern scholar analyses the after effects of these development as he says:

“After reaching Agra in April 1582 the Mughal ladies may have related to the emperor their tales of woe and humiliation. The absence of any reference to this episode in Akbar’s letter to Sharif of Mecca which was probably dispatched before the arrival of the ladies at Agra, also suggested, that Akbar came to know about this affair through his ladies... The report proscription of *Sadaqat* (Alms) in the holy sanctuary seems to have insensed Akbar

¹¹². *Muhimme Daftarleri*, 39, p. 160, *Farman* No. 349, p. 238, 19, *Muharram*, 988 AH, (March 6, 1580), Cf. Naimur Rehman Farooqi, *Mughal Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relation between Mughal India and Ottoman Empire (1556-1748)*, Ibid.

¹¹³. Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, ed. Agha Ahmad Ali and Abdur Rahim, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1873-77, Vol. III, p. 385.

¹¹⁴. *Muhimme Daftarleri*, op.cit., 39, p. 160, *Farman* No. 349, Cf. Naimur Rehman Farooqi, *Mughal Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relation between Mughal India and Ottoman Empire (1556-1748)*, op.cit., p. 118.

further. This was enough to provoke the proud Mughal to suspend relations with Hejaz.”¹¹⁵

Therefore, it seems that Badauni's claim that Akbar abandoned the practice of sending pilgrims and forbade pilgrimage on religious grounds is not correct, as we find that there were other reasons involved in it. It has been proved that Akbar never gave any order for the general masses to leave the practice of pilgrimage. In 1593, while the third Jesuit mission arriving to the Mughal court encountered several men and women going for pilgrimage to Mecca at Gujarat.¹¹⁶

Therefore Badauni's argument that Akbar forbade practices of *namaz* and pilgrimage, caused by his irreligiousness, is not based on facts. However, several blames leveled by Badauni on Akbar were the supported by other contemporary and near contemporary chronicles. Even the writings of Abul Fazl gives such type of indication, that religious atmosphere of Akbar's court had not been in accordance with conventional Islam.

It appears that Badauni's strong criticism of Akbar was basically areaction of his orthodoxy and personal grievances. He displayed his

¹¹⁵. Naimur Rehman Farooqi, *Mughal Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political and Diplomatic Relation between Mughal India and Ottoman Empire (1556-1748)*, op.cit., pp. 118-119.

¹¹⁶. *Akbar and the Jesuits*, tr. by C. H. Payne, London, 1926, p. 60.

displeasure in *Muntakha-ut Tawarikh* for his not getting as much as he deserved. He writes that both he and Abul Fazl were given the mansab of twenty, but Abul Fazl by his time serving qualities could manage to get mansab of two thousand.¹¹⁷ It seems that he was not happy in the court and complains for his nothingness.¹¹⁸ He being disgusted and dissatisfied represented to the Emperor that he would not be able to be present in the court with such small grant, but he was promised that he would be given subsidies, and presents, during the marches¹¹⁹. However, he states that ‘he seldom received promised presents.’¹²⁰ His grudge with Abul Fazl also played an important role in the development of his negative attitude towards Akbar.

To sum up our discussion, there was something in the religious policy of Akbar, which persuaded Badauni to criticize him though personal reasons led him to do so. The words further testify it as, ‘to exhale much smoke than the fire.’¹²¹

¹¹⁷. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 206.

¹¹⁸. Ibid.

¹¹⁹. Ibid., p. 207.

¹²⁰. Ibid.

¹²¹. Athar Ali, “Sulhkul and Religious Ideas of Akbar”, op.cit., p. 167.

CHAPTER 6

A BRIEF SURVEY OF *NAJAT-UR RASHID*

Besides the *Muntakhab ut-Tawarikh* and translation of a number of Sanskrit and Arabic works, Badauni has left behind only one other complete work—*Najat ur Rashid*—a voluminous work with a text running into 513 printed pages.¹

Badauni calls this work a *risala* (magazine) or an *ujalah* (hastily produced) but it is a voluminous work with regard to the matter that it contains.²

It appears from a statement in *Najat-ur Rashid* that this work was compiled by Badauni on the request of a friend and benefactor, Khwaja Nizam-ud-Din Ahmad Bakhshi, the author of *Tabaqat-i Akbari*.³ Badauni informs us that Nizam ud Din himself had wanted to write this book and had been taking notes for the purpose and had already prepared an outline. But

1. *Najat-ur Rashid* was edited by Saiyid Moinul Haq and published from Idarah Tahqiqat, Pakistan, Lahore, 1972.

2. Ibid., pp. 64, 71, 318, 320, 329, 425, 465, 467, 477.

3. Ibid., pp. 1-2, 82.

he then decided to request Badauni to take up this project and handed over to him whatever material he had with him on the subject.⁴

Unfortunately *Najat-ur Rashid* has not received the attention from the historians and scholars it deserves. It is imperative to objectively analyze this book in order to get a better understanding of its social and intellectual milieu. Moreover, its study will also help us to understand many of the postulates of Badauni spelt out in the *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, for it not only supplements the information therein but also provides the theoretical background for Badauni's stand in Akbar's religious policies and views.

For understanding the real nature of the work, it is necessary to take into account the objective of the author in compiling this work as well as the actual contents of the book.

In the very beginning Badauni states that this book deals with the vices of soul and sins both mortal and venal, the knowledge of which is imperative for people.⁵

Besides introductory and concluding sections, the book consists of seven chapters (*fasl*). The introductory section discusses importance and

4. Ibid., pp. 1-2; But modern scholar S. A. A. Rizvi does not seem to be convinced by this statement of Badauni that work was undertaken on the request of Nizamuddin. For details see S. A. A. Rizvi, *Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar's Reign*, Delhi, 1976, p. 440.

5. *Najat-ur Rashid*, op.cit., p. 2.

imperative need of repentance (*taubah*), without which one cannot hope to attain divine forgiveness and lead a religiously correct life.⁶

With the help of quotations from the *Koran* and *Hadith*, it is sought to impress upon the reader that if one breaks a pledge not to commit sins again and again, even then one should not feel diffident to repent. It is never too late to repent.⁷

The first chapter deals with seventeen mortal sins headed by polytheism (*shirk* literary making associates with God). In Islam *shirk* is considered the greatest sin and one who commits it is denied divine grace and forgiveness unless he repents.⁸

Other mortal sins outlined in this chapter were persistence in sin, considering oneself secure from the wrath of God, losing hope in God, misappropriating an orphan's property, theft, disobedience of parents, fornication (*zina*), sodomy, consumption of wine, forging witness, magic, usury, unjustified killing of human beings, disobedience of prophets, running from combat, calumny against God, forsaking prayer (*salat*) and poor rate (*zakat*).⁹

6. Ibid., pp. 2-15.

7. Ibid, pp. 2-15.

8. *Najat-ur Rashid*, op.cit., p. 25.

9. Ibid., pp. 25-33, 34.

The second chapter deals with forty heinous sins which lead to open infidelity (*Kufr-i Sarih*).¹⁰ A number of these were openly practiced at Akbar's court. Some of them were idol worship, worship of sun, veneration of stars, tying of Brahmanical thread (*zunnar*), application of qashqa on forehead, excessive interest in philosophy, heresy, honouring infidels, adopting practices of infidels, abusing *Ahl-i Baut* (Prophets' family), abusing companions of the Prophet, introducing innovation into the religion, prostration before someone other than God and pronouncing opinion on religious matters (fatwa) without knowledge.¹¹

Badauni have discussed above mentioned sins in a purely academic and scholarly manner without taking the name of Akbar.

The third chapter deals with forty sins related to the practical aspect of Islam. These sins relate to non-observance of prayer, fasting and *zakat*, slaughtering animals without taking the name of God, gambling, highway robbery, rebellion against the king, lying, cheating, breaking promise, taking bribes, giving away secrets, castration and appointment of eunuchs in the haram, treachery fraud, flattery, helping tyranny and abusing the dead', etc.¹²

The fourth chapter deals with *Huququallah* (obligation due to the Almighty). The sins covered also number forty and include miscellaneous transgressions such as non-observance of *Juma* prayers, various modes of

10. Ibid., p. 35.

11. Ibid., pp. 36-173.

12. *Najat-ur Rashid*, op.cit., pp. 174-252.

relationship with woman not permitted in religion, urinating and defecating on the thorough fares, urinating in water, easing oneself under the shade of trees, cutting shady trees, slaughtering animals as a profession, selling human beings, painting, delay in paying back loans, taking omens, wishing for one's death, boasting about one's ancestors, begging without dire necessity, beating slaves without fault, waiting and liking flattery, etc.¹³

The fifth chapter deals with those offences which are considered to be inconsistent with civil behaviour and propriety of conduct. These also happen to number forty.¹⁴ The offences included in this category are wearing silk clothes, wearing clothes dyed with saffron, eating out of utensils of gold and silver, shaving the beard, abandoning circumcision, distilling wine, consuming opium and the like, playing chess, hearing music from strange women, blocking a thoroughfare, setting wrong precedent, keeping animals hungry, throwing excrement on the way, entering other peoples' houses without their permission, giving cause of grievance to the neighbours, hoarding in the hope of rise in price and selling arms to infidels etc.¹⁵

The sixth chapter covers miscellaneous offence also numbering forty. The misdemeanours put under this head include forgetting the *Koran* after having memorized it, talking during *khutba* and *azan*, conducting business in

13. Ibid., pp. 253-88.

14. It would seem that perhaps because of the significance of the number forty among the *sufis*; special care has been taken to somehow take the number of offences discussed under different heads to forty.

15. *Najat-ur Rashid*, op.cit., pp. 288-352.

mosques, praying in mausoleums and *hammams*, insulting elders, beating children, rebuking beggars, oppressing orphans, withholding counsel, using foul language, abandoning friends, not returning greetings, refusing hospitality to a guest under weighing, non payment of wages, proclaiming oneself *shahanshah*, destroying bridges and wells, making coarse jokes, imparting education to the unworthy etc.¹⁶

The seventh and last chapter also consists of forty offences, termed by the author as *taqsirat* (failing, guilt's). These offences are considered less serious than the others. They include false parenthood, separating son from mother, usurping *waqf* property, stealing water for irrigation, selling commodities on prices higher than prevalent in the market.¹⁷ It also includes dealings such as *mutaa* marriage, women riding horses and lighting lamps on graves etc.¹⁸

The *Khatimah* discusses correct method of repentance (*taubah*) and intrinsic wickedness of the world.¹⁹

Modern scholars have arrived at various conclusions about the nature of the remarkable work of Badauni. P. Hardy describes it as 'a work on sufism' ethics and Mahdvi movement of Badauni's days.²⁰

16. Ibid., pp. 354-424.

17. Ibid., pp. 425-99.

18. *Najat-ur Rashid*, op.cit., pp. 434, 460, 463.

19. Ibid., pp. 508-28.

Ivanhov calls it a 'sufico-ethical treatise, richly interspersed with interesting anecdotes, controversial discussions etc.'²¹

Blochmann has described it as a 'polemical work'.²²

Harbans Mukhia refers to it as a book dealing with the problems of theology, mysticism, ethics and the propriety of certain ceremonies with a number of historical anecdotes.²³

S. A. A. Rizvi defines it as a 'theological mystical work'²⁴ but elsewhere says that 'the *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* is meant to destroy the faith of the sunnis in Akbar; the *Najat-ur Rashid* seeks to reiterate the principles on which orthodox sunnism can be revived; thus *Najat-ur Rashid* and *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* complements and supplements each other.'²⁵

But these conclusions and opinion do not fully justify and explain the nature and contents of this remarkable and valuable work of Badauni. Some of these descriptions are only partly true, others mostly off the mark.

20. P. Hardy, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. by E. J. Brill, Leiden & Luzac and Co., London, 1960, I, p. 856.

21. C.A. Storey, *Persian Literature: A Bibliographical Survey*, published by the Royal Asiatic Society of Britain and Ireland, Luzac and Co., London, 1970, I, p. I, p. 438.

22. Ibid.

23. Harbans Mukhia, *Historians and Historiography during the Reign of Akbar*, New Delhi, p. 110, n. 5.

24. See for example S. A. A. Rizvi, op.cit., p. 284.

25. S. A. A. Rizvi, op.cit., p. 285.

In a recent study, I. A. Zilli had made a good brief survey of *Najat-ur Rashid*'s contents and he is opinion that this work 'neither deals with Sufism nor ethics' and 'is basically a theological treatise and deals with the sins, crimes, offences and misdemeanors that Islam forbids'.²⁶ His conclusions have justified the nature and contents of *Najat-ur Rashid* to a great extent. But still more recently Ninomiya Ayako has disagreed with I.A. Zilli on one point. In her opinion, this work can be categorized as a sub-genre of ethics. According to her, in this work, Badauni basically argues which conduct is bad or sometimes, good and its reasons. So, a work of this kind can be included, among the works of ethics in modern categorization.²⁷ She further argues that Badauni himself admits this work 'does have a bearing or ethics'.²⁸ However, she agrees with I. A. Zilli that this work is basically of theological nature because for Badauni, ethics is primarily a way to *najat*, salvation. To be a good man is almost the same as to be a good Muslim and must be primarily based on sharia and secondarily on *muruwa* and *abad*,

26. Ishtiyag Ahmad Zilli, "Badauni Revisited: An Analytical Study of Najat-ur Rashid", *Medieval India: Essay in Intellectual thought and Culture*, ed. by I.H. Siddiqi, Vol. I, New Delhi, Manohar, 2003, p. 149.

27. Ninomiya Ayako, "Analyzing Sufism in 16th Century India: The Case of Badauni's Najat-ur Rashid", *PIHC*, 65 Session Bareilly 2004, Delhi, 2005, p. 345.

28. *Najat-ur Rashid*, op.cit., p. 22.

Arab Islamic ethical values and manners, as the titles of some chapters indicate²⁹

The *Najat-ur Rashid* is remarkable in the sense that while it is an open indictment of Akbar's religious policies and views, it does not refer to these concepts or mention Akbar by name. Bitterness or sarcasm, Badauni's hallmark in *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* is absent here. A dignified attitude is maintained and many practices adopted by Akbar (sins in the eyes of Badauni) are tackled in a scholarly and objective manner. Sins and heresies are discussed in the light of the *Koran* and *sunnah*.

Badauni's style of writing the *Najat-ur Rashid* is specifically different from his other works in other aspects as well. Here he states a fact and then quotes the *Koran* for or against the statement made. It is also discussed in the light of *Hadith* and Islamic jurisprudence. For the purposes of further elaboration, stories and anecdotes from history and sufi literature are employed. The repeated references to *Koran* reflect his deep knowledge of *Koran* and on the other hand it serves as a warning for posterity to act according to the precepts of the *Koran*. Further, it also shows that Badauni also had complete knowledge of the history of Islam, different schools of thought and the different sects.

Najat-ur Rashid also throws light on certain evils that existed in society during the time of Badauni. For example, he is against the trend of

29. Nimiya Ayako, op.cit., p. 346.

leveling charges against pious women³⁰, taking of interest (wrong in the eyes of God)³¹, injustice done to orphans³² etc. etc.

To conclude, we can say that to have a balanced picture of Badauni, the most remarkable and controversial medieval writer, it is necessary to have a detailed study of *Najat-ur Rashid*. It is said that '*Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* was written in vengeance'.³³ He refers to Akbar's views and measures, in his *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* but expatiates on their theoretical aspect in his *Najat -ur Rashid*. As *Fatwa-i Jahandari* is helpful in a study of Badauni's *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*, so also *Najat-ur Rashid* serves as an adjunct to Badauni's *Mutakhab-ut Tawarikh*. That Badauni's criticism of Akbar's religious attitude and policies was based on his religious convictions and interpretation of Islamic law and *Shari'at* is borne out by *Najat-ur Rashid*, wherein every vagary and innovation of Akbar has been discussed, without indicating the background, in the light of the sunna and the sharia.³⁴

30. *Najat-ur-Rashid*, op.cit., p. 17.

31. Ibid., p. 19.

32. Ibid.

33. Harbans Mukhia, op.cit., p. 111.

34. K. A. Nizami, *Akbar and Religion*, Delhi, 1989, p. 257.

CONCLUSION

Abdul Qadir Badauni, the most controversial author of his time, belonged to a family having a low rank in Mughal imperial establishment. Despite this, he got education from the learned and spiritual men of his age. Regular attendance in the circle of *Sufis* and Islamic scholars created great scholarly qualities in him. He had acquired deep knowledge of *Quran*, *Hadis* and Islamic jurisprudence. Further he had acquired the knowledge of Islamic History, different schools of thought and the different sects. Being well versed in all traditional services, he also acquired proficiency in other forms of cultural and intellectual activities and also had deep knowledge on science. He was a great scholar of Persian and Arabic poetry, mathematics, astronomy and music. But at heart he remained orthodox having belief in traditional Islam. As a versatile and accomplished scholar he wrote *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, *Najat-ur Rashid* and few others original works. He also translated a number of important works from Arabic, Sanskrit and Persian such as *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* etc.

To conclude we can say that literary contributions of Badauni were immense which can not be overlooked and had greatly enriched the culture of Mughal period. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in India saw the growth of new sects with new religious approaches like *Nuqtavis*, *Mehdvis* and

Roushania. *Nuqtavi* sect was founded by an Iranian namely Mahmud Basakhawani. According to him atom of dust (*Nuqta-i Khaq*) is the origin of human life. Transmigration of soul was an important aspect of his philosophical ideas. *Nuqtavis* considered him as promised *Mehdi*. They did not believe in hell and heaven, resurrection of human bodies or the Day of Judgment and had no faith in the Day of Judgment. Their thought was opposite to Islamic fundamentals. Due to persecution of Safavids *Naqtavis* came to India and got administrative post in Mughal administration. One of them Sharif Amuli appointed as *Sadr* and *Amin*.

Abdul Qadir Badauni blamed *Nuqtavis* for the deviation of Akbar's thought from his forefathers religion and used harsh language for them.' Badauni through his writing gives this impressions that *Nuqtavis* were responsible for Akbar's desire to attain a supreme position not only as a ruler but also as a religious head. They convinced Akbar that he was *Sahib-i Zaman* or renovator of new era. Further Abul Fazl depicts Akbar as *Farr-i Izdi* (light fro God). Abul Fazl who had enmity against orthodox *Ulema* due to his sufferings in the teen age, found a intellectual support to teach a lesson to the *Ulema* of the court.

According to Badauni Akbar under the influence of *Nuqtavis* applied reason and logic in religion which are not permissible to some extent in traditional Islam. Badauni's contemporary Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's writings

also support Badauni's perception about *Nuqtavis*. Abdul Qadir Badauni being an orthodox theologian was not ready to accept these religious developments. He uses very harsh and abusive language for *Nuqtavis*.

Abdul Qadir Badauni had sympathies for *Mehdvi* leaders who suffered at the hand of royal authorities at the instigation of traditional *Ulema*. He mentions about *Mehdvi* leaders Shaikh Alai and Sheikh Abdullah Niyazi who suffered hardship during the reign of Isalm Shah Sur. He also provides information about other *Mehdvi* scholars such as Shaikh Abul Fateh and Miyan Mustafaa. Badauni adopted an attitude for *Mehdvis* which reveals his inclination for it. He believed *Mehdvis* as group of saintly people and Syed Mohammad, the founder of *Mehdavisim* as its *Pir*. Their piousness, their critical approach for state and worldly *Ulema*, their humiliation suffered at the hands of Makhdum ul Mulk created reverence, respect, sympathy and faith for them in the heart of Badauni. In spite of all this he was not a *Mehdavi*.

On the other hand Abul Fazl's views about *Mehdavisim* and *Mehdvis* are unclear and confusing. He was not convinced with the claims of *Mehdvis* but their moral conducts were admirable for him. Abul Fazl was convinced with spiritual qualities of Shaikh Alai but in his eyes *Mehdavisim* was a whirlpool.

Abdul Qadir Badauni blames a large number of people for Akbar's departure from traditional Islam. The most important among them were Shias. In *Muntakhab-ut Twarikh*, he used harsh language for Shias but in *Nijat-ur*

Rashid his attitude for them is soft and polite. In *Najat* he showed great reverence for Ali. *Raushaniyas* were also criticized by Badauni for their religious views. In this connection Badauni had similarity with Abul Fazl.

A large number of Iranian intellectuals, poets, physicians and architects migrated to India because of policies of Safavid rulers of Iran. They greatly enriched the cultural atmosphere of Mughal court. Physicians like Hakim Ali Gilani, Hakim Ainul Mulk Shirazi, and Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani etc. who joined Akbar's court were not mere experts of medicine and cure but they had expertise in other fields of life which made them inseparable part of Mughal court. They served as military commanders, administrators and on occasions as diplomats. They also possessed high literary abilities which gave a new dimension to Mughal court culture. Hakim Humam, Fatehullah Shirazi and Abul Fateh Gilani were among authors of *Tarikh-i Alfi*. They also participated and gave their opinions in the philosophical and religious discussion held in the *Ibadat Khana*. Many non-conformist literary personalities including poets also flocked to the Mughal court due to persecution in their homelands. They were free thinkers and were accused by Badauni for their heterodox ideas. These poets were Ghazali, Mashhadi, Qasim Kahi, Jafar Beg Urfi Shirazi etc.

Another prominent intellectual of the court of Akbar was Fatehullah Shirazi. He held the high administrative post of wazir along with other responsibilities. As a scientist he prepared many mechanical devices (mills,

strange mirror and a wheel which cleaned twelve barrel gun). As a writer had some excellent work to his credit. He also translated a part of astronomical table of Ulugh Beg named *Zij-i jaded-i Mirzai*.

Shaikh Abdun Nabi and Makhdumul Mulk were prominent *Ulema* of Akbar's court but their mutual rivalries, their desire to power and wealth and their arrogant nature ultimately led to their downfall.

Shaikh Mubarak and Abul Fazl played important role in the expulsion of orthodox clergy of the court which led by Abdullah Sultanpuri and Abdun Nabi. Shaikh Mubarak and Abul Fazl had faced persecution at the hands of rulers on the instigation of orthodox *Ulema*. Therefore, the personal grievances and ideological differences with *Ulema* made Abul Fazl and Shaikh Mubarak determined to humiliate them.

The socio-cultural and religious atmosphere of Akbar's time was not very conducive for the orthodox *Ulema*. A large section of *Ulema* and *Mashaikh* adapted themselves with these new socio-religious milieu at the court while a few of them showed their indifference towards these new developments. However a section of *Ulema* who were uncomfortable with these changes offered some resistance for example Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, a prominent *Alim* of that period expressed his views about the religious upheaval in his letters. These letters were written against un-Islamic practices prevalent

in Akbar's court and also against court *Ulema* who were ready to go to any extent for love of money and power.

It is quite astonishing that letters dealing with religious innovations of Akbar have been written the reign of Jahangir. It is not easy to understand influence of Sirhindi on the Mughal court. However, some modern historians consider him as champion of Islam and responsible for establishing a semi-Islamic state under Jahangir. But this contention had been seriously questioned by some other historians.

However there are evidences indicate that Shaikh Ahmad's correspondence was not unilateral. Shaikh Farid and Abdur Rahin Khan-i Khana, two important nobles of the Mughal court replied to the letters of Shaikh Ahmad. But we are not sure about the magnitude of influence of Sirhindi on Mughal court as there is lack of historical evidences.

To conclude we can say Shaikh Ahmad's approach towards Akbar's policies was more vocal and bold but this method was adopted in post Akbar era. Another *Alim* who reacted to Akbar's religious policies was Abdul Huq Muhaddis Dehlvi. He considered people who were not familiar with ordinances of *Shariat* and have not even heard of traditional aphorism of *Ulema* are illiterate. He thought these people deserved to be educated and brought home the truth. For this purpose he established a *Madarsa*. In it he started teaching according to new curriculum *hadis* and *Quran* were specially emphasized rather

than other subjects. It appears that he was not in a position to counter religious experiments of Akbar. So he adopted a moderate approach. He tried to spread knowledge of *hadis* to prevent tumults of time. He kept himself aloof from the court of Akbar because he viewed it as hindrance to his desire to revive the *Shariat* and *Sunna*. Although he did not object openly the religious policies of Akbar but through his writing he asserted that Islam is complete and no one can make any change in it. He refuted the philosophers and intellectuals who had challenged the miracles of Prophet, in his book, *Madraj-ul Nabuwat*, though his letters to nobles like Shaikh Farid and Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khana mainly focused on the vital need of fostering the *Shariat* and strengthening the cause of *Sunna*. He also compiled several books on *hadis*, *fiqh* and life of the Prophet.

His objective was not much different from that of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi although they widely differed on their approach. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi was aggressive in presenting his thoughts while Shaikh Abdul Huq Muhaddis followed a very polite and persuasive approach.

Badauni also tried to defend the traditional Islam from the cultural and religious innovations of Akbar. But his approach was quite different. His opposition was kept concealed. His book, *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* came in to light after his death. His *Najat* was also kept secret or its circulation was restricted to few persons. In the beginning of *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh*, Badauni

depicts Akbar as a religious and kind hearted monarch having great reverence for Muslim Saints.

Then there was change in Badauni views about Akbar due to differences among *Ulema*, influence of Gilani brothers, Abul Fazl, Mohammad Yazdi, Birbal and Sharif Amuli, Akbar distanced himself from Islam. But Badauni's accusation of Akbar forbidding the *namaz* and *haj* is an exaggeration and not based on facts.

It appears that his critical remark about Akbar were basically a reaction of his ideology and his personal grievances. In his *Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh* he clearly mentions that he was not duly rewarded for the works that he carried out on imperial ordered. His grudge with Abul Fazl also played an important role in the development of his negative attitude towards Akbar.

Badauni's *Nijat-ur Rashid* is a classic work which has not received the attention that it deserves from the historians and scholars. This voluminous work contains seven chapters, besides introduction and concluding section. Badauni deals with the vices of soul and sins in the light of *Quran* and *hadis* in a very scholarly and academic manner. In this process, he has pointed out various innovations and practices at Akbar's court which were not according to the traditions of Islam without talking name of reigning Emperor.

Basically it is a theological treatise dealing with the sins, crimes, offences that Islam forbids and a work of ethics.

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